GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE CHANGE:
DEVELOPING A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING AND REFLECTION STRATEGY IN EXECUTIVE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

by
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Abstract

The shortage of globally focused strategic thinkers and business professionals, who can understand and adapt to multiple thinking perspectives in the globalized markets, limit China's engagement in global business opportunities. To cope with this challenge, Chinese business schools initiated the international executive professional development (IEPD) programs, which attempts a complex transformation process with interactions between the learner and the field learning experiences.

With the focus on professional development through experience, the literature review shows that the interactions between concrete experiences (environment) and meaning construction process (function) in an experiential learning cycle are essential to the personal changes in mindsets and behaviors (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Based on Lewin's (1947) field experience framework, a needs assessment on a 2014 IEPD-U.S. program, organized by Peking University, revealed two key issues in the learning experiences and collaborative reflection in the IEPD program. The assessment findings inform the direction of enhancing the meaning construction process with the emphasis on collaborative learning and reflection in the student learning community.

Drawing on the multidisciplinary theories and needs assessment findings, the intervention strategy research defines the global perspective change with the critical reflection model and the developmental model for managing paradox (Holt & Seki, 2012; Kember, McKay, Sinclair, & Wong, 2008). A three-stage reflective learning strategy is framed, meaning self-reflection before the learning program, collaborative sharing and reflection with technology innovation during the program, and the follow-up reflective practice after the program. As an examination of the reflection learning strategy, the

intervention was conducted in a 2015 IEPD-U.S. program. The program evaluation results demonstrate the effectiveness of the blended reflection learning strategy in improving the IEPD program design and accelerating business executives' global perspective development. The findings indicate that overseas field learning experiences cannot turn into solid value until the learners internalize the experiences with personal meaning construction through continuous reflective learning before, during, and after the IEPD program.

Keywords: *blended learning, reflection, collaborative learning community, international education, professional development*.

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Chapter 1

Executive Summary

In the past decade, a booming economy and innovations in technology have resulted in an increasingly interdependent world involving investment, trade, and other economic activities. While Chinese business is actively engaging in business globalization, China is short of globally focused strategic thinkers and business professionals, who are able to understand and adapted to multiple thinking perspectives in globalized markets. This talent shortage limits China's engagement in international business opportunities.

To cope with this issue, Chinese business schools designed international executive professional development (IEPD) programs to provide students with opportunities to experience the international business environment. However, these IEPD programs are being challenged by providing students with only lip service about globalization; therefore, the trip is of little value to their professional development. To make business executives truly benefit from the IEPD programs, business schools need to understand the underlying causes of the problem and develop appropriate intervention strategies to enhance their global perspective development.

This applied research begins from reviewing the existing literature on the core components of an IEPD international experiential learning program. With past research shedding light on this problem of practice (POP), a needs assessment is completed to probe into the underlying causes of the problem in the existing IEPD program. The needs assessment findings inform the areas for program interventions, and guide the direction of the intervention literature review. Drawing on the multidisciplinary theories

and empirical research, the intervention strategy is outlined and implemented. With the completion of the program evaluation, the assessment findings are used to examine the effectiveness of the program intervention. This full cycle of evidence-based research will inform the sustained program innovation in the future. This dissertation paper is organized with the above research procedures in five chapters.

In Chapter 2, with the focus on professional development through experience, the POP literature review includes constructivism, situated cognition, and experiential learning theory as the multidisciplinary theoretical framework. Constructivism positions learning as an activity in meaning creation instead of mapping the real world onto the learner (Ertmer & Newby, 1993). Linking students' prior knowledge and experience with the designed learning experience can help students build the mental framework to the higher mental development (Bransford, Brown, & Cockings, 2000). Situated cognition theory emphasizes the equal importance of the social context to the learner in the meaning creation activity (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). Building upon the grounding learning theories, Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory defines a learning cycle with information processing from concrete experience to reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation. This process allows learners' cognitive, affective and behavioral development through interactions with others and introspection within themselves.

Lewin (1947) defines a field experience formula with four essential components, including learner (person), learning experience (environment), instructional activity (function), and learning outcome (behavior change). This formula provides a framework to examine the core components of the international experiential learning program. First,

the learning outcome of an IEPD program is global perspective development. Datar, Garvin, and Cullen (2010) introduce a knowing-being-doing framework in business schools, which defines global perspective development in three domains. Knowing refers to the knowledge learning. Being refers to the global mindset that could understand one's attitudes, values, beliefs, and that of others from different cultural backgrounds. Doing represents skills and behavior development in different social contexts.

Second, learning experience is the foundation of meaning construction. In the situated learning environment, experiential learning activities consist of a reciprocal learning process between people and field activities (Brown et al., 1989). Different types of concrete interactions could provide students with specific social and business contexts with multiple sensory inputs.

Third, meaning construction methods are critical for learning perspective change. Kolb and Kolb (2005) assert that reflection allows students to check their assumptions and beliefs, understand why things happen in certain ways, and develop awareness of the situation from different perspectives. Collaborative learning, discussed by Brown et al. (1989), regards students as both novice and expert, reciprocally giving and receiving each other's cognitive learning through such experiences as group reflection or inquiry learning activities. These sense-making methods help students to explore answers for their mental perspective changes. The review of literature indicates that concrete experiences (environment) and meaning construction process (function) are essential to the global perspective change.

Being informed by the literature, in Chapter 3, a needs assessment was conducted

in May 2014 on an IEPD-U.S. program organized by Peking University. The assessment work was guided by three research questions around students' field experiences, learning methods, and learning outcomes. In total 34 Executive MBA (EMBA) students participated in the course evaluation survey and a post-program learning reflection session. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, analyzed in parallel and then merged to have greater insights into the problem and its underlying causes.

The needs assessment demonstrated two major findings. First, a large gap exists between effective and ineffective learning experiences among a total of 25 learning sessions. The data shows that the World Bank and West Point Academy visits got the highest student ratings as the most valuable learning experiences. In contrast, other business organization visits were ranked with the lowest ratings as having less perceived value. The poor overall performance of company field visits explained students' lower ranked learning outcomes in the business globalization field. As reported by students, the underlying causes include the lack of meaningful connections and the lack of student engagement in the business field visits.

The second finding is that the lack of reflection and collaboration limit students' abilities to develop alternative thinking perspectives for the potential mindset and behavior changes. The data shows that the collaborative learning methods received the lowest ratings, including the face-to-face class reflection, group reflection, and student feedback. Linking this finding with the reflection quality as shown in students' self-reported learning outcomes, only 5.9 percent of the learning outcomes achieved the critical reflection level, based on Kember, McKay, Sinclair, and Wong's (2008) critical reflection assessment framework. As reported by students, the main underlying causes

include the lack of timely class review and reflection, the lack of discussion and sharing among students, and less association between daily learning experiences and team projects. The needs assessment findings inform the direction on enhancing the meaning construction process with the emphasis on collaborative learning and reflection in the student learning community.

With the underlying causes revealed from the needs assessment work, Chapter 4 turns to the intervention strategy research based on an interdisciplinary theoretical framework. Social constructivism regards learning as a shared experience in terms of social interaction. Brown et al. (1989) resonate that a collaborative learning community allows students to synthesize and multiply individual learning and create new solutions. In this learning context, paradox describes contradictory yet interrelated elements that persist over time, which requires learners to shift mindsets from conflict to multiple possibilities (Kise, 2014). To achieve this perspective change, mindfulness facilitates one's attention to inner thoughts, to examine assumptions with context-specific learning experiences, and finally reconstruct personal meanings with new insights (Hardiman, 2012; Mezirow, 2000).

The literature review identifies global perspective change with two dimensions. Holt and Seki's (2012) developmental model for managing paradox (DMMP) in the paradoxical global environment demonstrates five developmental stages, representing global mindset changes from denying alternative perspectives to engaging in adaptive behaviors. Doing critical reflection enables the learning transformation. Kember et al.'s (2008) four-category critical reflection framework links the quality of learning with knowledge, mindset, and actions. These models provide two dimensions to assess

students' learning outcomes in global perspective development.

Research shows that reflective learning is framed in different stages of an experiential learning cycle. The first stage is self-reflection before the learning experience, which represents a process of mindfulness on the existing perceptions and assumptions about the learning topics (Tuleja, 2014). The second stage is interactive reflection during the learning experience. With the development of technology, the traditional face-to-face classroom can be blended with the online learning environment. WeChat mobile social media provides a collaborative learning space for timely reflection and sharing among students asynchronously. In the online learning environment, Garrison, Anderson, and Archer's (2000) community of inquiry framework emphasizes the importance of social and instructional presence. With social presence, active involvement and open exchange of thoughts helps confronting, mutual scaffolding, and synthesizing different thinking perspectives. Instructional presence could guide students' thinking perspective changes through accepting possibilities, differentiating values, and integrating the paradoxical situations with adaptive behaviors (Smith, Besharov, Wessels, & Chertok, 2012). The last stage is reflective practice after the learning experience. Schön (1983) regards reflection in action as a way of on the spot thinking and adjustment while doing the task. This practice integrates students' intentions and actions, and visualizes the value connection between program learning outcomes and their professional development.

Based on the intervention literature review and needs assessment findings, the intervention is focused on incorporating an interactive reflective learning strategy with three stages in the IEPD program. In the first stage, students complete a pre-trip written

reflection before the IEPD program. The purpose is to understand students' perceptions of the learning topics and their expectations on the learning outcomes. In the second stage, in addition to three class oral reflection sessions, a WeChat online discussion board is used for daily student sharing and reflection on their field visit experiences. The instructor posts daily questions to guide students' reflection within the online class space. This stage helps students to open their minds to more possibilities, attend to different thinking perspectives, and integrate new insights into their own global thinking frameworks. In the third stage, students are encouraged to discuss follow-up actions in the post-program reflection writing. In six months, a follow-up reflection questionnaire is used to collect students' reflective practices on the specific learning outcomes and the impacts on their professional practice.

Following the intervention strategy, a program evaluation plan is specified in Chapter 5. The evaluation is conducted in an IEPD-U.S. program in 2015 with three research questions.

RQ1: To what extent does the reflective learning modules promote student participation in the collaborative learning community of an IEPD program?

RQ2: In what way does reflective learning promote global perspective changes?

RQ3: What are the most valuable global perspective learning outcomes in promoting students' development in the professional context?

The research participants include 31 second-year EMBA students from PKU. The control group is the 2014 EMBA student cohort who participated in the same program one year ago. The research method is a convergent mixed methods design, in which quantitative and qualitative data are collected in parallel, analyzed separately, and then

merged (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The evaluation variables include both implementation process and intervention outcomes measures. Fidelity of implementation measures includes participant responsiveness and quality of program delivery (Dusenbury, Brannigan, Falco, & Hansen, 2003). The outcome evaluation uses one-group pre-post-follow up evaluation method, and uses 2014 cohort control to compare the quality of students' post-program reflection. The outcome measures include the reflection quality in knowledge, mindset, and behavior change, the developmental stage of global perspectives, the most valuable learning outcomes, and the impacts of the IEPD program in students' professional development.

Chapter 6 concludes this applied research project with evaluation findings and recommendations. First, the blended reflective learning methods are proven to promote student participation, with the evidence of highly evaluated reflection learning methods and high participant responsiveness of 121 reflection posts in both WeChat online discussion and in-class reflection sessions. Second, the outcome assessment results in both reflection quality and global perspective developmental stage show large effect size between the pre and post reflection comparison and smaller effect size between the post and follow-up reflection. These assessment findings prove the value of the reflective learning method in promoting students' global perspective changes. Finally, the evaluation findings reveal that the thinking perspective and behavior change in the business leadership development domain is regarded as the most valuable learning outcome. The learning impacts are inducted in five categories, which reveal the key fields of interests that the business leaders could execute in their business practices.

In conclusion, the program evaluation demonstrates the effectiveness of the

blended reflection learning methods in improving the IEPD program design and accelerating business executives' global perspective development. The findings indicate that overseas field learning experiences cannot turn into solid value until the learners internalize the experiences with personal meaning construction through continuous reflection before, during, and after the IEPD program. As Kolb and Kolb (2009) assert, the cyclical learning process forms an experiential learning spiral, which has a transformational power to guide people's life-long development. As a next step, the research findings recommend that further research needs to be conducted on students' online engagement behavior and constructing the reflective practice community for the continuous learning transformation. With the sustained education innovations, these cyclical evidence-based research and implementations will contribute to the ultimate goal of developing global business leaders.

Chapter 2

Introduction of POP

In the past decade, a booming economy and innovations in technology have resulted in an increasingly interdependent world involving investment, trade, and other economic activities. The economic data show that global foreign direct investment in 2012 amounted to over $1.35 trillion (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD], 2013), compared with $55 billion early in the 1980s (Kumar, 2002). China's outward foreign direct investment registered $84 billion in 2012 (UNCTAD, 2013), compared with $3 billion in 1991 (Peoples' Daily Online, 2004, January 7). Globalization is continuing to expand with interconnectedness and interdependence felt within and between organizations, cultures, and countries in political, economic and social life (Maringe & Foskett, 2012).

The Chinese economy has experienced an opening-up to high-speed development over the past 30 years, with increasing interactions with foreign business organizations. However, the shortage of globally focused strategic thinkers and business professionals, who are able to understand and adapt to multiple thinking perspectives in the globalized markets, limits China's engagement in international business opportunities. McKinsey Global Institute reports that China will need 75,000 business leaders to work for Chinese and multinational companies with global ambitions between 2015 and 2020, but competent business leaders amounted to only 3,000 to 5,000 by 2005 (Farrell & Grant, 2005). Chinese business leaders are accustomed to judging international business issues and making decisions merely from a Chinese perspective, thus encountering difficulties in effectively learning and navigating international business practice. The

demand for business leaders and criticism from the market calls for higher accountability of business schools in providing business professionals with global perspectives.

Traditionally, learning programs within schools are often pedagogically useful, but leave a great gap between "knowing" and "doing" in the real world. With increasing attention of the market to educational outcomes, education reforms move gradually from input equality to outcome accountability (Datar, Garvin, & Cullen, 2010; Mehta, 2013). Early in 1983, the first National Education Guiding Strategy, released by Mr. Deng Xiaoping, began to tie national competitiveness and economic revitalization to education reform (Zhang, 2012). With the increasing talent demand from the market, Chinese Executive MBA (EMBA) education was founded in 2002 (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2002). The National Report on the Long-term Education Reform and Development Strategy (2010-2020) further highlights the role of education in China's global competitiveness (Ministry of Education [MOE], 2010). Today, dynamic globalization creates a cross-border learning context, which provides students with an opportunity to see and experience how business operates differently in another cultural and social environment, and then draw conclusions accordingly.

Under the pedagogical innovation on experiential learning, Chinese business schools are exploring the study abroad experience for business leaders, as China's ancient wisdom asserts that it is better to travel ten thousand miles than to read ten thousand books (Dong, 2012). However, the learning process is not a linear economic production system with clear input and output control. The EMBA short-term study abroad program is under scrutiny that students may only get lip service about

globalization; therefore, the trip is of little value to their personal and business development. The issue focuses on the black box of the complex learning transformation process.

Challenges from economic globalization, the market demand for globalized business leaders, and the evolvement of education policies urge business schools to rethink the way of preparing competent business professionals for the increasingly interdependent global market. In response to these challenges, Chinese universities initiated international executive professional development (IEPD) programs for EMBA students, which aim to foster students' global perspectives to navigate the complexity of the world. However, it is not clear what learning components are more effective in optimizing student learning outcomes, and the extent to which these learning experiences could equip students with international perspectives necessary for business success. To find effective strategies to improve this innovative program, the first phase of this study will focus on reviewing the core components of an IEPD program. The purpose is to find out critical factors that have direct impacts on developing global perspectives. This literature review will become the research foundation to guide the following needs assessment design and analysis.

An IEPD program is a complex learning transformation process with reciprocal interactions between learners and various learning experiences. The learning goal of the program is to break through personal fixed mindsets to develop global perspectives for professional development in the interdependent international environment. Because of the emphasis on professional development through experience, the literature review will include constructivism, situated cognition, and experiential learning theory as the

interdisciplinary theoretical framework, discuss key components of study abroad programs, and conclude with the statement of the POP and objectives of the project.

Theoretical Framework

Lewin (1947) proposes four essential components in a field experience, including learner (*p*erson), learning experience (*e*nvironment), sense-making process (*f*unction), and learning outcome (*B*ehavior change). These components formulate an equation of B=f (p, e), which demonstrates a framework of an effective study abroad experience.

The science of learning defines three principles on how people learn (HPL), in which a core principle is to build a conceptual framework (Bransford et al., 2000). Constructivism resonates that learning is an activity in meaning creation instead of mapping the real world onto the learner (Ertmer & Newby, 1993). This disciplinary perspective highlights the central role of learners in personal meaning creation. Vygotsky's (1978) concept of zone of proximal development (ZPD) frames the learning zone between the actual level and potential level of development under the collaborative learning activities. Therefore, it is critical to link students' prior knowledge with current learning activities, and make learning transformation a dynamic process to develop higher-order thinking. ZPD theory reveals the social nature of learning as a shared experience in terms of social interaction and language. People interpret experiences and construct meaning based on their work, learning, social interaction, and the idea system; therefore, the role of educators is to provide learners with situated learning contexts and help build the mental framework of advanced knowledge with their unique creation of meaning (Ernest, 2010).

While constructivism highlights the central role of the learner, sociocultural

theorists emphasize the situated cognition, asserting the equal importance of the social context of the activity to the learner in meaning creation. Situated cognition theory argues that learning is an interaction among people's mind and body, tools and technologies, and the environment with other people, which aims at building competencies of shared cognition, tool manipulation, and contextualized reasoning and awareness (Gee, 2008). Therefore, the role of school in the learning process should be preparing people as adaptive learners to participate in the society with shared cognition, tool manipulation, and situation specific competencies (Resnick, 1987). Dewey further contends that school should be more than preparation for life, but run more like life itself (Bransford et al., 2000). As a way of simulating an authentic learning process, the cognitive apprenticeship theory identifies a six-step teaching method, consisting of modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection, and exploration (Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1987). This theory embeds conceptual knowledge in the activity within real social contexts, and the situated learning context enables students to make sense of the conceptual knowledge with motivation, confidence and orientation toward contextual problems.

With the learner and situated learning context in place, experiential learning theory decomposes the sense-making process with an experiential learning cycle, including concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation. This cycle displays a flow of information processing and learning transformation in a complete learning loop (Kolb, 1984). Dewey's early theory of experience grounds education as a holistic and continuing experience reconstruction process for human learning and development (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Different from traditional classroom

learning, the experiential learning process starts from a concrete experience, which reflects the sociocultural functioning of learning in achieving economic, civic, and cultural goals of education (Resnick, 1987). The learning process embraces both the physical and psychological environment to allow learners' cognitive, affective and behavioral development through interactions with others and introspection within themselves.

With the above theoretical framework, the literature review sheds light on the key components of an experiential learning program, including learning outcome (behavior change), learning experience (environment), and sense making process (function). The insights of past research will inform the scope of the POP and research direction.

Review of Literature

Globalization prompts people to develop international perspectives to see and embrace both similarities and differences in the complex cross-country environment. Therefore, business schools explore different models in global education from increasing international faculty and students to building overseas campus. International programs, such as global consulting projects, international immersion, and international residency, take the most diversified program designs, but all place students beyond the traditional classroom and immerse them in the global experiential learning environment (AACSB International-The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business [AACSB], 2011; Center for International Business Education and Research [CIBER], 2009; Datar et al., 2010). No matter which learning format, the primary work is to understand what constitutes global perspectives that business leaders should demonstrate as learning outcomes of an IEPD program.

Learning Outcomes

Datar et al. (2010) propose a knowing-being-doing framework in developing global perspectives of future business leaders. The first domain, "knowing," refers to knowledge that helps students identify, analyze, and evaluate differences in business practices and the cross-cultural environment (Datar et al., 2010). An AACSB report on the globalization of management education proposes a learning matrix between business curriculum and six cross-cultural dimensions, including cultural, legal/regulatory, political, economic, financial and other factors (AACSB, 2011; Ghemawat, 2008). Research of MBA and EMBA study abroad programs also reflects that the working knowledge of regional business models and practices as well as political, economic, and cultural environments are primary learning outcomes in the cross-country study framework (Forray & Woodilla, 2009; "Global residencies," n.d., para. 1; "Global study tour courses," n.d., para. 2; Hallows, Wolf, & Marks, 2011; Paul & Mukhopadhyay, 2003; Tuleja, 2008; Wei, 2013).

The second domain, "being," refers to a global mindset, which involves psychological awareness of one's attitudes, values, beliefs, identity, and that of others from different cultural backgrounds (Braskamp, Braskamp, & Engberg, 2013). Bennett's (1986) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) emphasizes the switch of a worldview from denial, defense, minimization, to acceptance, adaptation, and integration with an ethno-relative mindset. This mental development process facilitates students' ability to understand people and analyze business practice of another country from different perspectives. Self-awareness is also critical in forming a global mindset, as peoples' predisposition, expectations, and reactions influence their perceptions,

judgments, decisions, and understanding of themselves in others' eyes (Roberts, Conner, & Jones, 2013).

The third domain, "doing," represents skills and behavior development in different life contexts (Datar et al., 2010). Skill development and behavior change cannot be acquired only from abstract knowledge, but need to be honed by constant practice. Therefore, "doing" outcomes vary from general analytical and communication skills to comprehensive assignments, such as business plans and consulting projects (Hallows et al., 2011; Paul & Mukhopadhyay, 2003; Tuleja, 2008; Wei, 2013).

Knowledge (knowing), global mindsets (being), and behavior (doing) together contribute to global perspective development. However, empirical research finds mixed overall learning outcomes on either improving or failing to demonstrate significant evidence on personal development (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006; Tucker, Gullekson, & McCambridge, 2011; Tuleja, 2008). Therefore, it is worthwhile to examine the learning outcomes of the IEPD program to identify major areas that need further improvement.

Both executives and business school deans agree that business schools face challenges in developing students' global perspectives with both knowledge and global mindsets for the ultimate goal of demonstrating competence in global business practices (Datar et al., 2010). An IEPD program provides students with an experiential learning opportunity to develop global perspectives through a learning cycle of experience, reflection, conceptualization and experimentation (Kolb, 1984). In this process, the sensory inputs from concrete experience (environment) and subsequent sense-making process (function) are critical to activating behavior changes.

Concrete Experience

Based on Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD theory, a personal learning zone is determined by both the actual level of development and learning goals. The actual level of development is anchored by linking and visualizing prior knowledge, and personal learning goals will be built upon a variety of situated learning experiences in the authentic social and business environment.

Prior knowledge. Students' prior knowledge and experience, as the foundation of their learning journey, will influence how far they can go and how much they will be empowered to transform knowledge into practice by the end of the experiential learning cycle. Traditional learning is a teacher-centered process with one-size-fits-all method, without attention to students' diversity or prior knowledge. The new science of learning places students at the center of the learning process, asserting that learning is a constructive process with the motivation of searching for meaning based on previous learning (Bruning, Schraw, & Norby, 2011). Experiential learning theory details this learning cycle by linking the past, present, and future experiences, in which what they bring to the learning process will determine what and how much they can learn (Roberts et al., 2013). Since EMBA students join the IEPD program with diversified prior experiences, it is critical to let students think aloud based on their prior knowledge, and link their attention through different situated learning experiences in the experiential learning process.

Situated learning experience. "Practice is the sole criterion for testing truth" (Misra, 1998, p. 198) is an influential maxim in China. This statement highly aligns with Brown et al.'s (1989) theory that learning and cognition are fundamentally situated.

Person and environment are interdependent variables and interact with each other in the learning experience (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Situated learning theory further elaborates that knowledge and learning are indivisible in nature between learners and environment, where they think, act, and interact with affordance and effectivity (Gee, 2008).

Unlike the traditional static classroom, experiential learning activities consist of a reciprocal learning process between field experience and the conceptual framework in the people-environment interactive learning process. Traditionally, business organizations set up apprenticeships between business experts and novices as an essential learning approach. Evidence shows that on-the-job learning experiences, mentoring, and informal training account for 70 to 90 percent of the learning in the workplace (Pfeffer & Sutton, 1999). Synthesizing this effective model in the school program and aiming at guiding students in problem-solving or task fulfillment, the cognitive apprenticeship model accesses models of expertise in practice and focuses on the diverse cognitive and physical learning through guided experience (Collins et al., 1987). Therefore, different types of concrete interactions with field experts could immerse students in specific business and social contexts with multiple sensory inputs to working memory.

However, the overloaded working memory during an abundant study abroad experience may delay or impede learning and brain schema building (Bransford et al., 2000). In addition, students may inevitably find themselves conflicting with local culture, feeling confusion, reconciliation or rejection of a new cultural context in the study abroad experience (Hottola, 2004). Therefore, the learning experience design must incorporate external concrete experiences with learners' internal meaning construction

and conceptualization process. This connection is essential to the transformation of thinking perspectives and potential behavior change.

Sense Making Methods

Sense making is the function between person and environment, which emphasizes the essential role of learners in learning transformation from information sensory input to the long-term memory (LTM). In the experiential learning cycle, the sense-making process takes both forms of intrapersonal self-reflection and interpersonal collaborative learning.

Self-reflection. Simply exposure to the learning experience is not enough. "Experience teaches nothing unless people reflect on it" (DeSimone, 2013). Confucius, China's ancient philosopher and educator, states that by three methods we may learn wisdom: first by reflection, which is noblest; second by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is bitterest (Wen, 2013). Experiential learning theory asserts that reflection and conceptualization are core steps to transform concrete experience into new knowledge (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Critical reflection allows students to check their assumptions and beliefs, understand why things happen in certain ways, and develop awareness on the situation from different perspectives. The value of reflection lies in facilitating students to seek emancipation by jumping out of perceived mental models. Kember et al. (2008) introduce a four-category reflection assessment framework to assess the quality of critical reflection in measuring students' learning outcomes. Self-reflection takes the primary form of sense making through reciprocal interactions with external field experiences, and continues through the entire learning process.

Collaborative learning. Brown et al. (1989) argue that learning is a process of

enculturation through social interaction and conversation; therefore collaborative learning is an essential way to make learning productive. Collaborative learning frames the externalized cognitive learning environment for novices to learn from one another and the teacher. Collaboration is not simply a "1+1=2" process, but goes far beyond by synthesizing and multiplying learning resources, individual knowledge, skills, and even creating new models or solutions. To further expand collaborative learning within a broader learning context, Lave and Wenger (1991) introduce a learning community concept as "a set of relations among person, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice" (p. 98). Within the IEPD student learning community, students travel and join all learning experiences together for two weeks. All students can act as both novice and expert, reciprocally giving and receiving each other's understanding in the entire learning process.

Past research demonstrates different sense-making methods to magnify learning outcomes, such as the guided individual and group reflections, reciprocal feedback, and inquiry learning, and so forth (Bransford et al., 2000; Collins et al., 1987; Coryell, 2011; Roberts et al., 2013). These sense-making methods guide and propel students to explore answers to both cognitive learning and metacognitive awareness in their mental perspective changes. Together with concrete field learning experiences, the student-centered meaning construction process will empower students to maximize their learning outcomes through self-reflection and interpersonal collaboration in the IEPD program.

Globalization has narrowed the physical distance between people, but it is critical to breaking cognitive and psychological barriers and developing global perspectives.

The review of literature indicates that a global perspective is built upon three dimensions, knowledge (knowing), global mindsets (being), and behavior change (doing). IEPD programs immerse students in experiential learning cycles to construct their personalized global perspective frameworks. Among core components of the experiential learning cycle, concrete experiences (environment) and sense-making process (function) are essential to help students achieve expected changes in their learning outcomes.

Past research offers a clear framework to examine an IEPD program, but focuses little on the practices in MBA and EMBA programs, not to mention Chinese study abroad programs in other countries. A needs assessment is done to examine the key components of a Chinese IEPD program, and identify the gap for program improvement. The findings of the needs assessment will guide further discussion on the intervention plan in the next development stage.

Statement of the Problem

The accelerating business globalization challenges business leaders to open their minds for alternative ways of doing business in the international market. However, Chinese business leaders are accustomed to judging international business issues and making decisions merely through a Chinese perspective, thus encountering difficulties in effectively learning and navigating international business practices. Beijing International MBA in Peking University addresses this issue by initiating IEPD programs, which are expected to have impacts on students' global perspective development. Aiming at pursuing sustainable program improvement, the program developers need to decipher what learning components are more effective in optimizing

student learning outcomes, and the extent to which these learning experiences could equip students with global perspectives necessary for business success.

Therefore, the objectives of the IEPD program improvement project are, first, to identify and optimize concrete learning experiences with interactions between students and local social contexts; second, to identify effective and ineffective meaning construction methods, and reconstruct the sense-making process to accelerate mental perspective shifts between different business environments; and finally, to demonstrate learning transformation in improving personal and business development in the long term. Being informed by the literature, a needs assessment and subsequent intervention plan were worked out to (a) identify major gaps in the key components of an IEPD program; (b) propose interventions based on exploring and synthesizing literature research; and (c) implement the proposed intervention with both short-term and long-term improvement goals.

Based on the project outline, the next step is to design and implement a needs assessment on an IEPD program. The needs assessment is guided by the following research questions.

RQ1: What learning outcomes were reported by participants in the IEPD program?

RQ2: What experiences were perceived as the most valuable in the IEPD program?

RQ3: What were the most effective reported learning methods?

The above research questions are expected to detect specific problems that affect students' learning outcomes in the global perspective development in both mindsets and behaviors. The needs assessment findings will guide the direction of intervention on the international experiential learning program.

Chapter 3

Needs Assessment

Context of the Study

Dating back 2,500 years, Confucius, China's ancient philosopher and educator, initiated experiential learning by encouraging his students to visit other kingdoms to learn local politics, economies, and cultures (Wen, 2013). Today, dynamic globalization expands the cross-border learning context, which requires students to see how business operates differently by understanding another cultural and social environment, and drawing conclusions accordingly. To cope with this dynamic change, Peking University (PKU) has initiated international executive professional development (IEPD) programs, aimed at fostering students' global perspectives to navigate the complexity of the world. IEPD programs have successfully immersed business executive students in the international business environment. However, simply knowing about a foreign society, politics, economy, and business practice does not necessarily mean one is ready to do business successfully in an international market.

In order to help students further develop the global perspectives to better adapt and navigate in the interdependent global market, a needs assessment was implemented to identify major gaps in the key components of an IEPD-U.S. program organized by PKU in May 2014. Needs assessment is a systematic approach to learning about the existing issues of an organization with evidence for solution design (Soriano, 2013). The needs assessment was focused on (a) identifying the underperforming field learning experiences and the underlying causes behind them, and (b) identifying effective and

ineffective learning transformation methods, which impact the learning outcomes demonstrated by the EMBA student cohort.

The IEPD-U.S. program provided a two-week international immersion experience once a year, and up to 50 EMBA students registered for this program with two credits. This program was highly regarded by students, as reflected by a 2014 annual curriculum survey, but there was no consistent course evaluation data to inform program improvement. To begin this process, a detailed course evaluation survey was designed to collect students' assessments on the effectiveness of their field learning experiences, knowledge transformation methods, and learning outcomes. In addition, students' feedback on their specific learning outcomes was collected from a post-program student reflection session.

Target Audience

Stakeholders are those who can make a claim on or be influenced by the organization's strategy, resources inputs and outputs (Bryson, 2004). In the IEPD-U.S. program, the stakeholders include seven groups of people.

1. A dean is in charge of international programs and cooperation, and expects to identify the most important learning experiences that could impact students' ability to attain global perspectives and the effectiveness of various learning methods in transforming learning experiences.
2. A faculty member focused on the cross-cultural learning program expects to know to what extent the students value the cross-cultural learning experiences.
3. A director of the Department of Academic Affairs is in charge of curriculum evaluation reform, and expects to see whether the newly designed course evaluation

for this program could better reflect the performance of the course and identify the areas for further improvement.

4. A class administrator manages the student affairs, program logistics, the survey form distribution and collection. She also engages in the program review.
5. The EMBA students register for this elective two-credit course. They are encouraged to fill out the course survey forms, and give written feedback on the strengths of the program and areas for improvement in terms of field learning experiences, knowledge transformation methods, and learning outcomes.
6. The U.S. partner schools organize specific field learning sessions to the IEPD student cohort. The partner schools expect to get useful information on the quality of the learning sessions and the areas that can be improved for the next year.
7. Speakers from the business community enjoy sharing their business experiences as a way of giving back to the community and are open to new ideas through interactions with EMBA students. They are interested in learning the most significant learning outcomes of Chinese business executives.

Research Questions

The needs assessment was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What learning outcomes were reported by participants in the IEPD program?

RQ2: What experiences were perceived as the most valuable in the IEPD program?

RQ3: What were the most effective reported learning methods?

Method

Participants

An IEPD-U.S. program was organized by Peking University in New York and

Washington D.C. on May 3-15, 2014. There were 39 EMBA students who attended this learning program, among which 34 EMBA students participated in the course evaluation survey and the end-of-trip reflection session. Since five students left the program earlier due to business reasons, they did not join the course evaluation survey on the last day of the U.S. study trip. Among the five students who left, the average age was 39.6 years old, with 80 percent from general management functions. About 20 percent were female students, and 80 percent were males. Their demographic data was in line with the backgrounds of the 34 students who participated in the course evaluation. Based on the author's observation and communication with these students during the U.S. trip, they highly appreciated this IEPD program and the opportunities to learn from the field experiences, such as West Point leadership lecture and the World Bank sharing on the global development of Chinese companies. They also expressed the willingness to learn from more local business best practices. Their reactions were consistent with their classmates as shown from the needs assessment results; therefore, their absence will not skew the needs assessment findings.

Among all 34 students who participated in the course evaluation survey, the survey collection rate was 100 percent (N=34). Of the above study respondents, 20.6 percent of the respondents were females and 79.4 percent were males. Students' ages ranged from 30 to 53 years old, with the average age of 41 years old, as shown in Table 1. In terms of nationality, 32 were from China, one from Singapore and one from the U.S. The sample represented various management functions and job levels, with 79.4 percent coming from the general management role and 76.5 percent from the general manager/chief executive level. Their respective industry backgrounds were quite

diversified, as evidenced that no more than 20 percent were from one single industry. As for enterprise ownership, 58.8 percent were from Chinese private companies, 23.5 percent from Chinese state-owned enterprises, and only 17.6 percent from foreign-invested and joint ventures.

Students' travel experience data indicated that 50 percent of students never went to the U.S. before the IEPD program; 29.4 percent stayed in the U.S. less than one month, and only 20.6 percent visited the U.S. for more than two months. Students' international business experience shows that only 23.5 percent of students have been involved in international business. In addition, 50 percent of students had no plan to develop their business in the international market but were more interested in understanding the difference in international markets and learning the best practices of international business.

Tools

Three sources of data were included in this study: a course evaluation survey, a post-program student reflection session, and student background information.

First, the EMBA student cohort filled out a 2014 IEPD program evaluation form in paper format on a five-point Likert scale by the end of the 2014 IEPD-U.S. program in May 2014, as shown in the appendices (O'Leary, 2014). SPSS software was used to analyze descriptive data on the ratings of all learning experiences, learning methods, and learning outcomes reported from the paper survey results. SPSS software was also used to report students' background information, including age, gender, industry, function, job level, company ownership, English level, U.S. travel experience, and international business development experience. Two open-ended questions were included in the

survey form to collect students' descriptive feedback on the most valuable learning outcomes and any problems or advice related to the field experiences, learning methods, and course administration. The qualitative data were summarized by thematic analysis method (O'Leary, 2014).

Second, a post-program student reflection session was held at the end of the U.S. study trip on the last day. Right after the course evaluation survey, students were invited to share their reflection with all classmates. In the one-hour reflection session, students shared their learning outcomes drawing from this program.

Third, student background information, as extant data, was retrieved from the student database. This demographic information was used to outline EMBA students' profiles and characteristics.

Figure 1 outlines a data matrix, which shows the relations between the research questions and data collection tools on how the data collected with these tools will inform the research questions.

Figure 1

2014 Program Cohort Data Collection Methods

Data collection tools	RQ1: What learning outcomes were reported by participants in the IEPD program?	RQ2: What experiences were perceived as the most valuable in the IEPD program?	RQ3: What were the most effective reported learning methods?
Course evaluation survey	Q4: student self-evaluation on their learning outcomes	Q6: student evaluation on the most valuable and the least valuable learning experiences	Q7: student evaluation on the most effective and the most ineffective learning methods
	Q5: the most significant learning outcomes gained from specific learning experiences.	Q5: comment on the most valuable learning experiences.	Q9: problems reflected from the program (learning methods)
		Q9: problems reflected from the program (learning experiences)	
Post-program student reflection session	Learning outcomes categorized by dimensions		
	Learning outcomes assessed by the self-reflection framework		

Procedure

Data collection. The class coordinator sent out a course evaluation form in paper format to 34 EMBA students on the last day of the U.S. trip. All students filled out the survey questionnaire anonymously and returned the form to the class administrator before the end of the day.

A student reflection session was held on the last day of the U.S. IEPD trip. There were 15 EMBA students who voluntarily shared their significant learning outcomes. Other students could respond to each other's viewpoints and add new reflection lenses

to the class. The reflection session was facilitated by the professor. The author took notes of students' statements.

Student background information, including name, gender, age, industry, company, job position, job function, job level, and company ownership, was retrieved from the student database, which was administered by the Department of Academic Affairs.

Data analysis.

***Data management plan*.** All data records were strictly maintained by assigning a code number to each participant so that data was never directly linked to an individual's identity. No identifiable information was included in any reports of the research published or provided to the school administration. Surveys were collected in paper format. All completed forms and research data were kept in a locked cabinet only accessible to the investigator. Electronic data was stored on the computer, which was password protected. Any original paper documents were to be shredded five years after collection. Only group data was included in publication; no individual data was ever published.

Independent variables in this study include student background information, learning experiences, and learning methods. Dependent variables include students' learning outcomes.

Statistical tests. SPSS and Excel software were used to perform the frequency calculation and sorting order of quantitative data. Quantitative data includes student background characteristics, program learning experience assessment, learning method assessment, and self-evaluated learning outcomes.

Background characteristics cover several indicators, including age, gender, industry, company ownership, job function, job level, past U.S. travel experience, and international business development experience. Past U.S. travel experience and international business development experience levels were collected from the student self-evaluation survey questionnaire, as shown in the Appendix. SPSS software was used to perform the descriptive statistics on students' demographic information, including age, gender, industry, company ownership, job function, and job level, all of which was described in the participant profiles. Past U.S. travel experience was coded with 1 = no experience, 2 = less than one month, and 3 = more than one month. International business development experience was coded with 1 = participate, 2 = plan to participate and 3 = have no plan. SPSS was used to perform the frequency calculations and show result distribution in each coded category.

Learning experiences refer to the field learning sessions in the IEPD program. There were in total 25 learning sessions, which covered diversified field experiences including scholars' lectures, U.S. and Chinese company visits, higher education institute visits, and governmental organizations. Question 6 of the course evaluation survey collected students' evaluations ratings on the 25 learning experiences, with a five-point Likert scale from 1 = not helpful at all to 5 = very helpful (O'Leary, 2014). SPSS software was used to perform frequency calculation to show the percentage of each score received by every learning experience, from 1 = not helpful at all to 5 = very helpful. The evaluation results were ranked based on the ratings of 5 (very helpful) and 4 (helpful) to show students' overall recognition of the specific learning experiences.

Learning methods provide students with direct tools to transform field experiences into conceptual knowledge and personal awareness. Indicators comprise specific instructional methods, such as lecture, discussion, reflection, sharing, and feedback. This variable was measured in question 7 of the course evaluation form on a five-point Likert scale (O'Leary, 2014). SPSS was used to perform the frequency calculations on the percentage of all scores marked by students, from 1 (not helpful at all) to 5 (very helpful). The same method was used to run Excel software in identifying the most helpful learning methods being used in the learning process. The ranking result showed the most effective and the least effective learning methods based on students' personal learning experience.

Students measured their perceived learning outcomes based on nine program learning outcomes under four learning dimensions, covering leadership development, economics and business globalization, politics, and cross cultural awareness. This assessment was intended to reveal the most valued learning outcomes and the least valued learning outcomes reported by EMBA students. Question 4 in the course evaluation survey targeted this variable on a five-point Likert-type scale from 5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree, as shown in the Appendix (O'Leary, 2014).

This learning outcome assessment was done for the first time, especially for this program improvement study. After this study, this assessment tool is to be integrated into the international experiential learning program as a way of supporting continuous program improvement. SPSS and Excel software were used to perform data calculation with the same methods as used in the learning experience and learning methods analysis. The final ranking showed a clear indication of the most significant learning outcomes

demonstrated by students.

Qualitative data coding. Qualitative data was summarized by thematic analysis method (O'Leary, 2014). Learning outcomes, reflected from students' feedback to question 5 on the course evaluation survey, were coded with culture, politics, economics/business, and leadership based on the learning matrix of global education proposed by AACSB (2011).

The program improvement data were reflected from students' feedback to question 9 on the course evaluation survey. This data was coded by the four learning stages of an experiential learning cycle, namely concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb, 1984).

Finally, the post-program student reflection summaries were coded by Kember et al.'s (2008) four-category reflection assessment framework, including non-reflection, understanding, reflection, and critical reflection. Qualitative data contains rich information to reflect the underlying causes behind the statistical results and guide the potential directions of the intervention.

Needs Assessment Findings

The Most Significant Student Learning Outcomes

The results of the learning outcome self-assessment showed that 97.1 percent of EMBA students reported the most significant learning outcomes in the "leadership development" and "cross-cultural awareness" dimensions, as shown in Table 2. In contrast, only 73.5 percent and 79.4 percent of students reported their significant learning outcomes respectively in the "Chinese business globalization" dimension. This learning dimension was ranked at the bottom of all learning outcomes.

Table 2

Summary on 2014 Cohort's Self-assessment on the Most Significant Learning Outcomes

Learning dimensions	Learning outcomes	Overall agree (4+5)
Leadership development	To find alternative ways of developing talents into leaders of character and independent thinkers.	97.1%
Cross-cultural awareness	To be more open to the U.S. society and people from different cultural perspectives.	97.1%
Chinese business globalization	To understand key success factors and challenges to Chinese companies	73.5%
Chinese business globalization	To be able to interpret Chinese business expansion from a global perspective.	79.4%

Note: 5= strongly agree; 4= agree; 3= neutral; 2= disagree; 1=strongly disagree

Students reported their specific learning outcomes in the post-program reflection session. Among students' reflection, 41.2 percent were categorized under the leadership development dimension, 32.3 percent were attributed to the cross-cultural awareness dimension, and 20.6 percent involved in the Chinese business globalization dimension, as shown in Table 3. These results were consistent with the statistical results in Table 2 that students achieved the most significant learning outcomes in the leadership development and cross-cultural awareness dimensions, but demonstrated less learning outcomes on Chinese business globalization.

Table 3

2014 Students' Reflection on the Learning Outcomes

Learning dimensions	Leadership development	Cross-cultural awareness	Chinese business globalization	Political system
Percentage of feedback	41.2%	32.3%	20.6%	5.9%
Reflection	Visionary, charisma, follower, listener, persistence, self-directed change	Trust, soft power, inclusiveness, transparency, cultural roots	Long-term oriented, business value, follow the local practice	Political system is hard to transfer; need more self-directed trials

In addition to the above statistical results, students' learning outcomes were categorized by Kember et al.'s (2008) self-reflection assessment framework with non-reflection, understanding, reflection, and critical reflection category. The result was shown in Table 4 that 61.8 percent of the learning outcomes achieved the level of knowledge understanding, but had no direct connection with their personal experiences. Only 5.9 percent of the learning outcomes achieved the critical reflection level, which was directly related to personal growth and action planning.

Table 4

Students' reflections on the learning outcomes

Category	Learning outcomes
Non-reflection	8.8%
Understanding	61.8%
Reflection	23.5%
Critical reflection	5.9%

Both student self-assessment and reflection results indicated that although EMBA

students were confident about their learning outcomes in the leadership development and cross-cultural awareness dimensions, most of the students did not demonstrate the critical reflection ability in transforming the learning outcomes into personal growth and action planning. There is a need to introduce effective instructional interventions to guide students' higher-order thinking. Chinese business globalization also needs more attention, since students demonstrated less effective learning outcomes in regard to this core learning objective. To understand the reasons behind these learning outcomes, it is critical to analyze the concrete field experiences and learning methods of the experiential learning process.

The Most Valuable Learning Experiences

Among 25 learning experiences, as shown in Table 5, the statistical result showed a large gap between the most valuable and least valuable learning experiences. Overall, 97 percent of students rated the World Bank/International Finance Corporation (IFC) visit and lecture the most valuable learning experience, with up to 90.9 percent of the students giving this learning experience the highest value. The West Point Academy visit also earned the highest overall recognition by 97 percent of students. The U.S. Capitol visit and lecture, given by a former member of the House of Representatives, also got as high as 94.1 percent of recognition.

Table 5

Summary on the evaluation of learning experiences

Learning experiences	1	2	3	4	5	Overall valuable (4+5)
Most valuable experiences						
World Bank/IFC visit			3%	6.1%	90.9%	97%
West Point Academy visit			2.9%	29.4%	67.6%	97%
U.S. Capitol visit with lecture			5.9%	14.7%	79.4%	94.1%
Least valuable experiences						
Chinese electronic company visit	3%	3%	48.5%	36.4%	9.1%	45.5%
Chinese real estate company visit	2.9%	11.8%	41.2%	32.4%	11.8%	44.2%
U.S. logistics company visit	6.5%	19.4%	45.2%	25.8%	3.2%	29%

Note: 5= very valuable; 4= valuable; 3= good to have; 2= not valuable; 1= not valuable at all

Students' further feedback explained their learning outcomes from the three most valuable learning experiences, as shown in Table 6. The World Bank/IFC visit, focused on the theme of Chinese business globalization, was ranked the most valuable learning experience (42.4 percent of feedback). Students reported significant learning outcomes around two dimensions, Chinese business globalization and cross-cultural awareness. They reported that the World Bank/IFC visit helped them think beyond Chinese perspectives and open their minds to alternative thinking perspectives by using convincing Chinese cases to illustrate the main problems encountered during international business development. They were aware of the value of respecting the local culture and business ecology, and establishing mutual trust between business partners. The West Point Academy visit (24.2 percent) and the U.S. Capital visit (15.2 percent) both indicated valuable learning outcomes on the leadership development

dimension.

Table 6

Summary on Three Most Valuable Learning Experiences and Learning Outcomes

Learning experience	Students' feedback on the learning outcomes	Percentage of feedback
World Bank/IFC visit: Chinese business going global	• Understand the interdependent relations between China and the world, and need to develop collaboration between the Chinese business and the international market. • Think from different perspectives to understand the value of respect, trust, and soft power in cross-country business development. • Open the channel for potential cross-country acquisition and financial cooperation. • Identify main issues encountered by Chinese companies during the international acquisition and expansion from real Chinese business cases.	42.4%
West Point Academy visit	• Being inspired by WP "duty, honor, country" mission • Learn specific methods for leadership development	24.2%
U.S. Capitol visit and lecture	• Respect the Charismatic leadership of the lecturer who was a former member of the House of Representatives • Value the site experience in learning U.S. political system	15.2%

In contrast, three company visits were ranked at the bottom of the learning experience list, as shown in Table 5. Only 29 percent of students rated the U.S. logistics company visit as having value, 44.2 percent of students recognized the visit to a China real estate company as having value, and 45.5 percent recognized the visit to a Chinese electronic company as having value.

Students reported the underlying causes of dissatisfaction, as shown in Table 7. The 82.8 percent of responses showed that the company learning experiences were not valued due to: (a) the lack of connection between field speakers and students as the

foundation of meaning construction; and (b) the lack of student engagement in understanding the key success factors and challenges in the company practice.

Table 7

2014 Cohort Feedback on the Areas for Improvement

Learning components	Areas for improvement	Percentage of feedback
Concrete experience	• Lack of clear and specific learning goals and distracted attention. • Lack of connection between companies and students, so it is difficult to catch the core value of learning from these great companies. • Lack of student engagement in understanding the key success factors and challenges in the company practice. • Need more learning preparation before the international trip, more insights to understand the American culture during the trip.	82.8%
Learning methods	• Lack of timely class review and reflection on the daily learning experiences. • Students were busy switching between different learning sessions, but seldom had opportunities to have deeper discussion and sharing between students in the learning community. • Team project was loosely structured and was not closely associated with the daily learning experiences.	10.3%
Experimentation	• Suggest to follow up student learning outcomes/action on personal growth and/or business development	6.9%

It is interesting to find that the company visit, as one of the main experiential learning formats, demonstrates a large gap between the most valuable learning

experiences and the least valuable experiences among the 25 learning sessions. While the World Bank/IFC visit received the highest recognition, other company visits did not provide the expected learning outcomes according to students' evaluations.

The Most Effective Learning Methods

The survey results demonstrated that traditional individual learning methods, such as lecture, discussion with professor and self-introspection, were highly valued by students, as shown in Table 8. Comparatively, students reported the lowest effectiveness of all team-based collaborative learning methods. Team discussion and reflection only received 84.4 percent of ratings as overall effective. Student sharing and feedback received 88.2 percent of ratings as overall effective, with only 20.6 percent of students giving it the highest ranking.

Table 8

Summary on the Most Effective and Ineffective Learning Methods

	2	3	4	5	4+5
The most effective learning methods					
Self-introspection			40.6%	59.4%	100%
Discussion with professor			47.1%	52.9%	100%
Lecture			48.5%	51.5%	100%
The most ineffective learning methods					
Student sharing and feedback	2.9%	8.8%	67.6%	20.6%	88.2%
Team discussion and reflection		15.6%	59.4%	25%	84.4%

Note: 5=very effective; 4=effective; 3=good to have; 2=not effective; 1=not effective at all

Based on students' answers to the areas for program improvement, as shown in Table 7, three underlying causes were reflected around the collaborative learning

methods. Students reported issues on (a) the lack of timely class review and reflection on the daily learning experiences, (b) the lack of discussion and sharing between students in the learning community, and (c) the team project that was not closely associated with the daily learning experiences. Students expressed that they were busy switching between different learning sessions with limited communication with speakers in each session. Without timely class review and reflection, they found difficulties to transform useful information from these learning experiences into their own knowledge system. There was no structured team sharing time and space that linked the team project with the daily learning experience, so it was hard to organize teamwork by students after a full day of the field learning experience. Students hoped to extend the interaction with speakers in each learning session, streamline the learning sessions, and add a daily reflection sharing session to help hone the knowledge intake and transformation both individually and collaboratively.

Students' feedback indicates problems concerning the lack of reflection, sharing and discussion in the collaborative learning process. In addition, the weak collaborations among team members affect the explicit team learning outcomes.

Discussion

The needs assessment results reflect several critical issues from the program learning outcomes, concrete field learning experiences, and learning transformation methods. The result of students' learning outcomes reflects two major issues. First, Chinese business globalization is one of the key learning dimensions of the IEPD program, but the learning outcomes around this dimension demonstrated less effective learning outcomes based on students' self-assessment. Second, based on Kember et al.'s

(2008) self-reflection assessment framework, most of the students did not achieve critical reflection to gain the ability to transform the acquired knowledge and thinking perspectives into their professional development. To understand the causes behind these issues, it is necessary to probe into the concrete field learning experiences (*e*nvironment) and learning transformation methods (*f*unction) in the experiential learning process, which work together to determine the learning outcomes (Lewin, 1947).

Large Gap Between Concrete Learning Experiences

Exposure to foreign business environments does not necessarily lead to the expected learning outcomes. Based on Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory, concrete experience is a solid foundation for sensory input and the subsequent learning transformation process. The needs assessment results demonstrate a large gap between the most effective learning experiences and the most ineffective experiences. While the World Bank/IFC visit received the highest recognition, other company visits were rated with less perceived value. The overall performance of company visits explains students' less learning outcomes in the dimension of business globalization.

The World Bank/IFC visit illustrated several best practices as reflected in students' feedback. First, speakers used Chinese business globalization cases to connect students' existing business experiences to the international business context. Second, speakers engaged students in changing thinking perspectives by sharing personal experiences in dealing with international business challenges. Lastly, the speaker highlighted the cultural values of respect, trust, and communication behind business ventures in the international business development cases. These practices conform with experiential learning theory by linking the past and present experiences, since what they

bring to the learning process determines what and how much they can learn (Roberts et al., 2013). The speakers created specific business and social contexts with real cases to engage students in a situated learning context (Gee, 2008).

With this best practice in mind, it is critical to understand the underlying causes of those ineffective learning experiences. The needs assessment results demonstrate two causes: (a) the lack of connection between the speakers and students as the foundation of meaning construction, and (b) the lack of student engagement in understanding the key successful factors and challenges in the company practices.

Both good and underperforming learning experiences provided valuable foundations to inform the further program interventions. The needs assessment results demonstrate a clear need to enhance the connection between students and field organizations in a way to open students' minds for alternative thinking perspectives and business practices.

Lack of Effective Collaborative Learning Methods

Experiential learning theory asserts that reflection and conceptualization are core steps to transform learning experience into new knowledge (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Students internalize new knowledge and perspectives by linking, comparing, and contrasting commonalities and differences from their experiences, and challenging what they take for granted in their perceived norms, values, and behavior systems (Pache & Chowdhury, 2012). Collaborative learning provides a process of enculturation through social interaction, by synthesizing and multiplying learning resources, individual knowledge and skills, and creating new solutions (Brown et al., 1989).

The results of the student survey reflect three underlying causes concerning the

problems of collaborative learning methods: (a) the lack of timely class review and reflection on the daily learning experiences, (b) the lack of discussion and sharing between students in the learning community, and (c) the lack of close associations between daily learning experiences and team projects.

To link above findings with the problems of reflection demonstrated from students' learning outcomes, the learning method assessment shows that the lack of interactive discussion and reflection in the student learning community limited their abilities in expanding alternative thinking for the potential mindset and behavior changes.

The needs assessment results indicate that collaborative learning did not effectively facilitate students to reflect, discuss, and conceptualize personal meaning in the learning transformation process due to the lack of appropriate instructional designs. The assessment findings demonstrate a need to improve the internal learning transformation process in a collaborative way within the student learning community of the IEPD program.

Constraints and Implications

This needs assessment is the initial analysis of an IEPD program, based on a small-sized student group participating in an international experiential learning program in 2014. The needs assessment findings have several limitations that need to be kept in mind for possible adjustment, if necessary, in 2015.

First, as an innovative experiential learning program, this IEPD-U.S. program opens once a year, and the student registration number is limited to no more than 50 participants. In 2014, there were 39 students registered in this program, and 34 students

joined the needs assessment survey. Although most of the students actively joined the survey, the small number of quantitative survey data could hardly support the significant statistical evidence from the program evaluation. This situation might not change dramatically in the next few years due to the limited size of the EMBA student pool in the school.

Second, since the course evaluation survey is the first version of this kind in the IEPD program, there is no historical data to benchmark its findings. The data of 2014 was saved for benchmarking in 2015, in terms of the learning process effectiveness and changes in student background characteristics.

Third, due to the time limitations, the program did not have the opportunity to collect students' pre-program reflection, and compare their pretest with their post-program learning reflection. Since the IEPD programs usually start the student registration process over half a year ago, it is important to keep timing in mind for the data collection planning and implementation in the next year.

Over the years, IEPD programs have successfully moved one big step forward to take executive students from the traditional classroom to the international business markets with perspectives that are largely in contrast to their own. In order to improve this innovative program, the needs assessment findings identify two critical areas for additional research on the potential interventions. First, there is a large gap between the effective and ineffective learning experiences. With the underlying causes discussed above, concrete learning experiences need to be reconstructed as a solid foundation for the subsequent meaning construction in the learning transformation process. Second, team collaboration and reflection do not play an effective role in facilitating the learning

transformation process. There is a strong need to optimize the meaning construction process with the emphasis on collaborative learning and reflection in the student learning community before, during and after the IEPD program. The needs assessment findings set a parameter to guide future interventions. The goal is to equip students with global perspectives by transforming invisible conceptual knowledge into visible changes in their professional development.

Chapter 4

Intervention Literature Review

The demand for globally focused strategic thinkers and business leaders in China has created an urgent need for international executive education. An IEPD program attempts a complex transformation process with interactions between the learner and the field learning experiences, with the expectation of finally promoting business executives' professional development. However, knowing about a foreign society, politics, economy, and business practice does not mean one is necessarily ready to do business successfully in the globalized market.

As informed by the needs assessment on an IEPD-U.S. program organized by Peking University, two critical areas were found for the potential interventions (Chai, 2014). First, student's course evaluations identified a gap between effective and ineffective learning experiences. The main underlying causes include: (a) the lack of connections between field speakers and students as the foundation of meaning construction, and (b) the lack of student engagement in understanding the key success and challenge factors in the company practices. Second, there is a lack of structured collaboration between students on reflective learning in facilitating students' global perspective changes. The underlying causes include: (a) the lack of timely class review and reflection on the daily learning experiences; (b) the lack of discussion and sharing among students; and (c) the lack of associations between daily learning experiences and team projects.

The underlying causes discussed above demonstrated a weak link between the field experiences and the subsequent reflection and experimentation in the experiential

learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). Critical reflection is regarded as the essential process of learning transformation from the observed field experiences to personalized meaning creation and adoption (Mezirow, 1990, 2000). This process helps students recognize their assumptions, examine assumptions with the context-specific learning experiences, and finally reconstruct their personalized meaning with new insights (Mezirow, 2000). Therefore, more structured instructions are needed to enhance critical reflection learning within students' collaborative learning community throughout the IEPD program. The research objective is to understand what global perspective changes occur in participants' mindsets and behaviors as a result of the reflective learning in the collaborative learning community of the IEPD program, and how critical reflection within and between students accelerates global perspective changes. The needs assessment findings set a parameter to guide the proposed intervention strategy. The goal is to equip students with the ability to develop a strategic global thinking perspective and professional practice in the globalized markets. The research questions to be asked include:

RQ1: To what extent does the blended reflective learning strategy promote student participation in the collaborative learning community of an IEPD program?

RQ2: To what extent does reflective learning promote global perspective changes?

RQ3: What are the most valuable learning outcomes of the IEPD program in promoting students' development in the professional context?

This chapter explores specific intervention strategies in constructing a reflective learning framework in the collaborative learning community based on constructivism, situated cognition, and paradoxical thinking theories and literature. After a thorough

review of literature, an intervention plan is proposed and the expected outcomes are hypothesized for the subsequent program evaluation.

Theoretical Framework

Experiential learning is a complex transformation process with reciprocal interactions between learners' conceptual knowledge and the field experiences, finally resulting in personal behavioral change (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). A concrete experience is enriched by critical reflection and integration, and transformed into the new action that triggers another experiential learning cycle in the different business context. As a whole, learning is a continuous process of interacting, albeit not necessarily in order, in a cyclical fashion (Kayes, 2002). This cyclical process forms an experiential learning spiral with transformational power to guide students' life-long development (Kolb & Kolb, 2009). Within the experiential learning cycle, interdisciplinary theories work interdependently to construct a theoretical framework for the proposed intervention.

Social Constructivism

Constructivism regards learning as a constructive activity in meaning creation instead of mapping the real world onto the learner (Ertmer & Newby, 1993). This disciplinary perspective resonates with Alexandar, Schallert, and Reynolds' (2009) principles of learning as change, process, and interaction. Alexandar et al. (2009) elaborate that learning is a multidimensional process that leads to enduring changes in people; meanwhile, learning is also a product that results in how people read and respond to the world physically, psychological, and socially. Knowledge is adapted to the situated learning context; therefore, social constructivism regards the learning process as collective mental functioning within the learning group (von Glasersfeld, 2005). A cycle of learning goes through appropriation, transformation, publication, and

conventionalization stage, in which people internalize the meaning based on their social interactions and personal beliefs (Ernest, 2010). Therefore, social constructivism posits that the learning process links past knowledge and the present level of development with future learning goals, which allows learners to be responsible for their own meaning construction by actively engaging in the interactive learning process.

Collaborative Learning Community

Situated cognition theory asserts, from a sociocultural perspective, that learning and cognition are fundamentally situated in the authentic activities (Brown et al., 1989). Different from the observer's perspective in the traditional school context, Cobb and Bower (1999) take actor's perspective to assert that learning happens collectively in a group-centered social community through participation and contribution. Collaborative learning goes beyond the "1+1=2" process by synthesizing and multiplying the learning resources, with the individual's knowledge and skills, and from this process, synergistically creating new solutions.

With the social nature of collaborative learning, Lave and Wenger (1991) propose a community of practice as "a set of relations among person, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice" (p. 98). International experiential learning programs connect students with foreign academic and business communities, which construct a broader sociological ecology system. Within this professional learning community, the interactions among the school leaders, students, partner schools, and business communities constitute different interfaces of collaboration in the educational reform (Coleman, 2011; Domitrovich et al., 2008). With the support of internet technologies, the learning community can work

across time and space as a virtually-constructed learning environment, increasing mutual scaffolding and reflective thinking among the learners in the entire learning process (Collins et al., 1987). These interactions could provide students with multiple thinking perspectives to co-construct meanings from the authentic learning experiences.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness, also called reflection, is a critical principle of learning. Neuroscience demonstrates that mindfulness is powerful in focusing attention on one's inner thoughts, emotions, and actions, by keeping oneself away from auditory stimuli and distraction in the physical environment (Hardiman, 2012). Reflection is a metacognitive approach, which equips learners with the ability to control their learning with clear learning goals and strategies, and helps them self-regulate and monitor their learning progress (Bransford et al., 2000). Experiential learning theory further elaborates that reflection connects and examines students' assumptions with specific learning experiences, and reconstructs their personalized meanings with new insights (Mezirow, 2000). Critical reflection requires a person to undergo a transformation of perspective. To undergo a change in perspective requires learners to recognize and change the presumptions (Kember et al., 2008, p. 374).

In the education field, mindfulness often takes the form of quiet reflection and reflective practice to help students pay attention to topics they are going to learn (Hardiman, 2012; Kember et al., 2008). Mindfulness provides a valuable connection between knowledge and action by shifting fixed mindsets and making sense of perceived experience (Thomas, 2006). The goal is to change mental models through exposure to different perspectives, new ways of looking at the world, and finally

creating openness to more opportunities.

Paradoxes/Polarity Thinking

Paradox, also regarded as polarity or duality, can bring dynamic changes in perception to the complex global environment. Smith and Lewis (2011) refer to paradoxes as "contradictory, yet interrelated elements (dualities) that exist simultaneously and persist over time; such elements seem logical when considered in isolation, but irrational, inconsistent, and absurd when juxtaposed" (p. 387). In facing different cultural contexts, the culturally endorsed implicit theory of leadership states that good leadership practice perceived in one country may not be effective in another country, depending on variables in the particular cultural context (Čarter, Lang, & Szabo, 2013). In a world full of contradictions, embracing duality to balance tensions is a key ability in constructing global perspectives (Black, Morrison, & Gregersen, 1999). Kise (2014) further describes the nature of paradox/polarity as interdependent energies that create a system; therefore, they exist in nature as polarities to manage, but not problems to solve. Paradox/duality describes the inescapable nature of the international business environment, which emphasizes shifting students' global mindsets from conflict and dilemmas (either/or) to multiple possibilities (both/and) (Bartunek, 1988).

Past research is heavily focused on global competency models and learning outcome assessment tools in international study programs, with little attention being given as to how to transfer these competencies to other environments through specific educational practices (AACSB, 2011). Based on the above learning and leadership theories, a learning transformation approach focused on collaborative learning and reflection is framed in the student learning community of the international experiential

learning program. Under this framework, students could construct their own meaning from the concrete field learning experiences through mindfully reflecting on their prior experience, attending to different thinking perspectives through interactive discussion, and finally integrate their new thinking shifted from global paradoxical context into concrete actions in their own professional practice.

Review of Literature

Global Perspective Change

Global leaders are expected to adapt to change and deal with the complexity of interpersonal relationships in the globalized business environment. Drawing on a leadership framework developed by West Point, Datar et al. (2010) use knowing, being, and doing framework to scope global perspectives as a learning outcome that business schools should adopt to develop future business leaders (Datar et al., 2010; Snook, 2004). The "knowing" component covers knowledge dimensions of economic and business, political, cultural, and education, among others (AACSB, 2011; Ghemawat, 2008). The objective is to help students identify and understand the similarities and differences of global markets, the responsibilities of leaders, and alternative approaches to influencing others.

The "being" component aims to change students' global mindsets with self-awareness of one's values and attitudes, and the impact of their behaviors on others. Among the three learning dimensions of global perspectives, "being" plays a critical role in driving thinking perspective changes. Bennett's (1986) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) emphasizes the switch of a worldview from denial to integration with an ethno-relative mindset. Adapting this model to the paradoxical global

environment, Holt and Seki (2012) developed a developmental model for managing paradox (DMMP). The DMMP model defines five developmental stages, including denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, and adaptation/integration. First, "denial" means global leaders do not realize the paradoxes and do not recognize alternatives to their own approaches. Second, "defense" indicates that global leaders recognize the existence of "either/or" polar alternatives but prefer the one with which they are most familiar or comfortable. Third, "minimization" represents that global leaders accept both alternatives with a "both/and" mindset and strive for balance yet may minimize the less-preferred way. Fourth, "acceptance" regards global leaders as respecting both alternatives. They see their own behavior in context and can accept paradoxical tension, but not necessarily know the solutions. Fifth, "adaptation and integration" mean global leaders shift their frames of reference to analyze problems from the other mindset; they engage in adaptive behavior and work with others to deal practically with paradoxes (Holt & Seki, 2012). This model provides assessment criteria to evaluate the developmental stages of global mindsets.

Finally, with both knowledge and global mindsets, the "doing" component involves interpersonal skill development and the behavior changes in solving problems and making decisions in the paradoxical context (Datar et al., 2010). To realize global perspective development, the acquired knowledge cannot be transferred to specific behavior changes automatically. Observation and critical reflection enable the learning transformation that links among knowledge, mindset, and behavior changes. Corresponding to the three learning domains of the global perspective, Kember et al.'s (2008) four-category reflection coding framework classifies the quality of critical

reflection on the thinking perspective change. First, “non-reflection” occurs when a student responds to the questions without attempting to connect with the theory or idea that is being addressed. Second, “understanding” shows the acquisition of theory learning without connecting to personal experience or real applications. Both non-reflection and understanding levels display the knowledge learning domains. Third, “reflection” takes the conceptual knowledge in relation to personal experience or life practice. This level of learning shows self-awareness that links knowledge with personal being. Lastly, “critical reflection” shows the transformation of perspectives with a new integrated conceptual framework and action plans through changing the existing perceptions. This level of learning shifts from mindset (being) changes to the concrete vision and action plans (doing) (Kember et al., 2008; Tuleja, 2014). With implementation of new vision, students are able to transform their learning outcomes in the professional context with personal and professional development.

In the international experiential learning context, based on the knowledge acquired from field learning experiences, the global perspective development should be driven by changing mindsets and behaviors, as agreed by both business school deans and corporate executives (Datar et al., 2010). The above DMMP model and critical reflection framework provide comprehensive assessment dimensions to reveal students’ learning outcomes in developing global perspectives. To realize the expected global perspective changes, a transformative learning process focused on reflective learning within and between students in the collaborative learning community will be discussed under the experiential learning framework.

Reflective Learning Model in the Collaborative Learning Community

In an experiential learning cycle, concrete experience is just the beginning of a learning transformation process. Reflective observation links prior knowledge and experiences; abstract conceptualization involves interactive discussion and shifts individual thinking perspectives; and finally active experimentation transforms new learning in the real world practice. Building upon active experience in the experiential learning cycle, Schön (1983) introduces reflective practice as a way to integrate intentional thoughts and actions within a professional development context. Kolb (1984) and Schön (1983) both elaborate the importance of reflection in every stage of the cyclical experiential learning process. Therefore, being embedded in the experiential learning cycle, the reflective learning process involves: (a) reflection on prior knowledge and experience, (b) reflection on concrete experience and reappraisal of the situation with thinking perspective changes, and (c) reflection on future actions.

Different from the traditional classroom, experiential learning programs constitute multi-faceted interactions in the collaborative learning community, including interactions between students and professor, student self-interaction, and the students' practice in the professional context (Coryell, 2011; Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Each type of interaction is different in the nature of the communication process. While self-interaction is a personal conversation within one student's mind, the interactive class discussion and reflection is a social conversation among students and professor. This class process explains the community of practice as a set of interactions in relation to other tangential and overlapping sets of interactions (Lave & Wenger, 1991). To maximize the value of individual and collaborative interactions within the student

learning community, a reflective learning framework is introduced in the international experiential learning programs (Jones and Bjelland, 2004; Roberts et al., 2013). The framework includes (a) student self-reflection before the international learning experience, (b) student interactive discussion and reflection during the international learning experience, and (c) student reflective practice after the international learning experience.

Reflective learning is a process of inquiry within and between people. Inquiry is "the act of exploration and discovery, to ask questions and to be open to seeing new potentials and possibilities" (Cooperrider &Whitney, 2001, p. 2). Inquiry learning provides a learning approach to open oneself to other perspectives in the world. Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich (2002) assert that inquiry learning allows students to practice critical analysis and reflection skills in the experiential learning framework. This approach has been applied with questioning method in the different professional development fields in opening the thinking perspectives (Casey, 2014; Paterson & Chapman, 2013). Therefore, the inquiry-learning approach guides students' thinking development throughout all stages of the reflective learning framework. This process aims to develop students' new knowledge and perspectives by connecting and comparing commonalities and differences with their own experiences, and challenging what they take for granted in their perceived norms, values, and behavior system (Pache & Chowdhury, 2012).

Self-Reflection before the International Learning Experience

Only knowing how to handle business operation does not mean one can successfully navigate the cross-cultural business environment. Students need to be

mentally prepared before joining the international journey. The science of learning places students at the center of learning, asserting that learning is a constructive process with the motivation of searching for meaning based on previous learning (Bruning et al., 2011). Building upon constructivism, the learning process starts by being aware of preconceptions and assumptions of the learners perceived from past experiences (Bransford et al., 2000). Experiential learning theory details this learning cycle by linking the past, present, and future experiences, where what learners bring to the learning process will determine what and how much they can learn (Roberts et al., 2013).

Reflection is a metacognitive approach to mindfully paying attention through self-monitoring, which links one's perceptions, assumptions and reactions to others and the situation in an experiential learning context (Tuleja, 2014). Critical reflection requires learners to undergo a transformation of perspectives, with recognition and change of presumptions (Kember et al., 2008). Jones and Bjelland (2004) frame the period before the international experience as "pre-reflection," a process of mindfulness on the existing perceptions and assumptions about the learning topics. Writing, as a quiet reflection tool, serves to visualize students' thinking through mindfulness. Tuleja's (2014) empirical research uses a pre-departure questionnaire with open-ended questions to help students become conscious of their perceptions and assumptions about specific issues related to the destination country. This tool helps students pay attention to topics they are going to learn by being aware of their existing thinking perspectives before the international learning program. With its elaboration function, writing puts pieces of information together in a more memorable way, and more importantly, paves the way

for students to achieve deeper levels of reflection and meaning creation in the subsequent learning experience (Hardiman, 2012).

The pre-departure reflection writing approach discussed above provides a useful learning tool to prepare students' self-awareness by mindfully reflecting on their assumptions and preconceptions under the existing mental framework. It propels students to integrate their personal experience in a meaningful way, and to set up a foundation for subsequent critical reflection during the international field learning experience. Therefore, it is valuable to initiate the IEPD program from pre-program self-reflection on student's perceptions and expectations about the foreign business and society, and their expectations of the learning outcomes. With this practice, pre-trip self-awareness will bridge the gap between thinking about an experience and actual learning from an experience. Pre-trip reflection writing is able to draw students' attention to the learning topics, but this pedagogical strategy requires a quiet personal thinking space. During the tight international field learning schedule, students will attend daily lectures and company visits together. In this learning context, collaborative discussion and reflection are able to add more value to the students' experience due to the social nature of human beings (Rock & Cox, 2012).

Interactive Reflection Learning during the International Learning Experience

As evidenced by the needs assessment, students lacked the opportunities to digest their learning experiences and share their thinking with classmates during the intensive daily field visits (Chai, 2014). The demand for structured reflection requires embedding collaborative reflection learning in the daily field experiences, which help students critically reflect on their beliefs and consolidate isolated pieces of information.

Dewey (2004) asserts that educational process includes both psychological and sociological sides, in which students' learning interactions facilitate the collaborative reconstruction of experience. Learning interactions take place based on both oral and written communication. Oral communication in the face-to-face context is widely used in conveying rich and fast-paced information with multiple non-verbal emotional expressions (Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000). In contrast, the text-based written communication provides students with time to reflect on higher-order cognitive learning (Newman, Webb, & Cochrane, 1997). The intensive experiential learning program provides a unique mobile learning context, in which oral and written communication could complement each other to boost shared critical thinking among students.

With the development of internet technology, the learning community is able to go across time and space as a virtually constructed learning platform. The online learning community provides an extended learning platform. Garrison et al.'s (2000) community of inquiry frames an online learning environment with social, teaching, and cognitive presence. Daspit and D'Souza's (2012) research further demonstrates that social presence and instructional presence in the online learning community are critical to influence students' cognitive development. An online community of inquiry will be discussed based on a WeChat mobile social media platform.

WeChat mobile social media as online discussion board. Online learning has evolved from early computer-based learning systems to diversified social media platforms. Online social media, such as facebook, twitter, and wiki, have been introduced in higher education as an online learning platform to complement classroom learning experience (Daspit & D'Souza, 2012; Rinaldo, Tapp, & Laverie, 2011). As a

new generation of internet development, mobile social media overcomes the limits of computer access and provides an "always-on" environment for information exchange among members of the social network (Counts & Fisher, 2010).

In China, WeChat, a new web-based mobile social media, was launched in 2011. WeChat provides instant messaging and group chat function with text message, voice message, and voice chats via the cellphone internet service (Tencent, 2014). The group chat function enables users to communicate asynchronously at anytime and anywhere with members of the same social network. By the end of 2014, WeChat has reached 500 million users according to the 2014 corporate annual report (Tencent, 2015). With its social nature and wide user coverage, WeChat provides a mobile platform, which is fast, interactive, and easy to operate on the cellphone (Zhang & Wu, 2013; Zhu, Shao, & Zhao, 2014). Research on the WeChat using behaviors demonstrates that the main factors affecting the use of WeChat are ease of use and connection with friends (Fu, Huang, Yan, & Ou, 2014; Mao, 2014). This social communication tool ensures students' easy access and social presence in the WeChat online environment. Therefore, to set up a WeChat online discussion board in the international experiential learning program constitutes a mobile collaborative learning space and promotes the open reflective discussions at any time during the field learning experiences.

Instructional presence in group reflection and discussion. "Experience teaches nothing unless people reflect on it" (DeSimone, 2013). Experiential learning theory asserts that reflection is central to transforming experience (Kolb, 1984). International experiential learning provides students with a unique environment where they inevitably meet contradictions or even conflicts when their perceived beliefs and value systems are

different from those of another society. Pache and Chowdhury (2012) assert that it is these paradoxes that constitute valuable learning opportunities for critical analysis and reflection.

Neuroscience demonstrates that the brain filters out 99 percent of sensory information when it is not perceived as relevant (Gazzaniga, 1998). What determines the relevance of sensory input is based on what kind of meaning is attached to the sensory stimuli and how this information is processed in the working memory (WM) and long-term memory (LTM) without long intervals (Schunk, 2008). With revisiting of specific learning experiences, frequent retrieval practice can produce greater learning effectiveness and long-term retention (Roediger & Butler, 2010). Therefore, frequent class discussion and reflection help students digest a large amount of information and facilitate critical reflection on their assumptions and beliefs, without being overwhelmed with many isolated pieces of information.

Smith, Besharov, Wessels, and Chertok's (2012) paradoxical leadership study provides a useful instructional framework to facilitate students' thinking perspective changes in minimizing contradictory interests in the social and business environments. First, acceptance helps reframe mental focus by opening the mind to abundant possibilities. People normally see the world with fixed perspectives and assume others see the world the same way as they do (Lieberman, 2005). Social awareness in the collaborative environment provides an opportunity to put oneself in another's shoes, which means being able to understand others through empathy (Ringleb & Rock, 2012). Second, differentiation demonstrates the recognition of values on each side, while at the same time is able to attend to the distinctions between both sides. Evaluating both

positive and negative sides of an experience helps increase the insights on the value judgments (Gibb, 1988). Lastly, integration requires leaders to identify synergies between contradictory interests. The leaders can reappraise the paradoxical situation and adapt their behaviors for engagement.

Under each step of the paradoxical learning framework, the reflective questions can be used to guide students' sharing, discussion, and reflection in both group WeChat discussion board and the face-to-face reflection sessions. This dynamic group learning process promotes students' cognitive development from ethnocentric to ethno-relative thinking perspectives (Bennett, 1986). Social communication and collaboration between personal understanding and shared view in groups are fundamental to students' cognitive development in the online learning community.

Social presence. Face-to-face oral communication allows students to present their thinking in a social environment. Building upon the advanced technology, group interaction in the WeChat discussion board is also able to make the online learning platform a live social place. Social presence highlights purposeful communication in an online environment, in which group cohesion and knowledge sharing are used to characterize social presence in the community of inquiry (Daspit & D'Souza, 2012; Garrison, 2009).

Group cohesion reflects the level of collaboration and participation among the participants. Brown et al. (1989) argue that learning is a process of enculturation through social interaction and conversation. Collaborative learning externalizes the cognitive learning environment for students to learn from one another. The active involvement of group members can be more effective in confronting, discussing, and

correcting fixed mindsets. Empirical study reveals that research collaboration fosters active involvement and the opportunity to hear different opinions, which enable participants to better comprehend the learning goals (Palincsar, Ransom, & Derber, 1988).

Knowledge sharing represents the exchange of thoughts, questions, and response among students and the instructor. With mutual scaffolding and reflection in the situated learning context, students are able to go beyond knowledge duplication to multiply individual knowledge, synthesize thinking perspectives, and even create brand new solutions (Brown et al., 1989). Social presence constructs a collaborative learning environment, in which the inquiry-based group discussion and reflection are able to guide students' reflective thinking and exploration in both the online and face-to-face learning community.

The WeChat online discussion board can be used as a daily group learning platform to share and expand students' thinking. In addition, three face-to-face class sharing sessions can be scheduled between field learning sessions to complement interpersonal exposure and oral comprehensive reflection. While this learning experience opens students' minds to more alternatives, there is still a distance between thinking differently and doing differently. All knowledge and awareness acquired from field learning experiences are like building blocks, "fresh solutions will result from disassembling and reassembling the building blocks in an infinite number of ways" (Kraft, 2005, para. 23). Therefore, students need to act on established thinking and deepen their embodied cognition (Howard-Jones, 2014).

Reflective Practice after the International Learning Experience

Experiential learning theory regards learners' experience as a valuable source of insights to guide organizational development with a planned course of actions (Kolb, 1984). However, international experiential learning programs often end up with reflection papers, but leave potential behavior changes in the personal and professional context beyond the scope of the programs (Tuleja, 2008; Wingenbach, Chmielewski, Smith, Piña, & Hamilton, 2006). The experiential learning programs need to bridge the gap to make the learning cycle fulfilled with real changes in the learner's professional practice.

Neuroscience research demonstrates that the effort of sorting out a solution from a large amount of stimuli boosts creativity by increasing neuron function in making meaningful connections (Howard-Jones, Blakemore, Samuel, Summers, & Claxton, 2005). Acting out learning materials with both mental and physical processes leads to multiple solutions with divergent thinking (Hardiman, 2012). Scalberg's (2013) investigation of the top-ranked business executive education programs also indicates that an action approach can be used in problem solving, leadership development plans, and experiential learning programs. Corporate training programs also encourage professionals to practice their learning on the job and follow up on their development (Brown, 2005; Burke & Hutchins, 2007). While a professional development program eventually ends, the executive students expect to leave with positive connections to their future development. The new vision can help students reframe the context of their problems and develop new courses of action.

To take a cyclical perspective with an end as a beginning, the end of the IEPD program is just the beginning of a new experiential learning cycle that nurtures real changes in practice. A leadership study demonstrates that organizational development is driven by a 10 percent contribution from vision and a 90 percent effort from implementation (Jick, 2001). To connect vision with implementation, reflection-in-action will draw practitioners' attention to the tasks they are working on, and examine the impacts of their learning in the actual implementation. Schön (1983) regards reflection-in-action as a way of on-the-spot thinking and adjustment while doing the task. This self-supervision process provides an opportunity to link students' program learning outcomes with specific actions, examine their effectiveness in the real context and adjust their actions accordingly. With this practice, students are able to realize their learning transformation with a close value connection between the learning experience and their professional practice.

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step (Laozi & Mitchell, 1991). Reflective practice helps students to bridge the knowing-doing gap by applying their learning outcomes to specific actions in the professional context. The value of this learning by doing process will be evidenced by reflecting on their new visions and practice. A follow-up reflection questionnaire will be used to help students reflect on their implementation progress, and to understand what specific learning outcomes have lasting impacts on students' professional development. Students' feedback will also contribute to the program's continuous improvement efforts for the future.

The literature review shows that coherent collaborative learning and reflection is crucial in facilitating an effective learning transformation process. Students' learning

interactions with self and others form a dynamic collaborative learning community, in which students are able to undergo thinking perspective changes and reshape their attitudes and behaviors for their personal and professional development.

Statement of the Solution

Based on the literature research and the needs assessment findings, a collaborative learning community focused on reflective learning practice is to be incorporated into the IEPD program. The objective of the intervention is to study whether students' collaborative learning community focused on reflective learning and practice in an IEPD program is able to accelerate their global perspective changes in both strategic thinking and practice. The intervention will target an IEPD-U.S. program organized by Peking University in 2015. The intervention plans to include three reflective learning stages with both individual and collaborative practice running through an experiential learning cycle of the IEPD program. Each stage is assessed by a reflection questionnaire.

Stage I: Pre-program Reflection Writing

The first stage is designed as a single pre-program reflection questionnaire with open-ended questions before the IEPD-U.S. program. The questions focus on students' perceptions of the U.S. leadership and students' expectations on their personal learning outcomes. To stimulate changes in students' thinking perspectives requires them to first recognize their fixed mindsets (Kember et al., 2008). Students need to complete this short reflection writing and return it to the instructor before the beginning of the IEPD-U.S. program. This self-reflection writing can visualize students' existing awareness of the learning themes, and prompt them to think about what they expect to

learn. Pre-program reflection helps students to mindfully link their past knowledge and experience with the expected learning outcomes. The rubric for reflection writing will be used to assess students' global perspectives before the IEPD program as a control variable for comparison with reflection tests after the learning process.

Stage II: Collaborative Reflection Sessions during the IEPD Program

International field experiences provide students with a paradoxical learning context, representing dynamic changes in the complex global environment. Since field experiential learning takes the form of intensive field visits and lectures in different cities and organizations of the United States, the on-going reflection sessions can incorporate both oral discussion and written reflection formats during the IEPD program.

To save time and space to allow daily class reflection during the busy field trip, a WeChat online discussion platform can be used for students to share, discuss, and reflect on their field visit experiences in U.S. government agencies, business, and academic organizations. The instructor needs to post daily questions based on the field learning contents to guide students' reflection writing and sharing within the virtual class space. With the contribution of different standpoints and opinions shared by students, students are able to learn from different thinking perspectives of their classmates and critically compare with their own assumptions and beliefs. This repeated daily practice helps students open their minds to more possibilities, meta-cognitively attend to different thinking perspectives, and finally integrate new perspectives into their own restructured global thinking frameworks.

Building upon the short reflection writings on the WeChat online platform, three face-to-face oral reflection sessions are structured in every 3 or 4 days during the U.S. field visits. Every student has a chance to share their most significant learning with the whole class, and is open for others' quick comments, self-connection, and further reflection within the student learning community. As a way of learning integration, students are required to complete a post-program reflection at the end of the program. The same rubric is used to assess students' global perspective development as their learning outcomes.

Stage III: Reflective Practice after the IEPD Program

The IEPD program is not only an eye-opening travel experience, but expects students to explore new ways of thinking about personal and professional development enlightened by diversified international learning experiences. To propel students' reflective practice after the IEPD program, the program encourages students to consider follow-up actions around their professional development and track their implementation by a follow-up reflection questionnaire in six months after the IEPD program. This hands-on work would add significant value to students by transforming their global thinking perspectives into concrete practice as they further develop their attitudes and behaviors. This intervention is intended to help students transform their thinking perspective changes into concrete behaviors; therefore making the best use of program learning outcomes in their personal and professional development.

Based on the program intervention outline, the author implemented and evaluated the proposed intervention solution. The program evaluation is guided by the following research questions as described in the beginning of this review.

RQ1: To what extent does the blended reflective learning strategy promote student participation in the collaborative learning community of an IEPD program? This answer is found by assessing the fidelity of the implementation process and students' participation in the three reflection learning modules in the forms of collaborative discussion and individual reflection questionnaires.

RQ2: In what way does reflective learning promote global perspective changes? This question is answered through the use of assessments and comparison between students' reflection writings in answering the pre, post, and follow-up reflection questionnaires. The same rubric is used to assess two dimensions of students' reflection works, including (a) the quality of thinking perspective changes with Kember et al.'s (2008) four-category critical reflection framework, and (b) the developmental stages of global perspectives (Holt & Seki, 2012).

RQ3: What are the most valuable global perspective learning outcomes in promoting students' development in the professional context? The intervention reveals the answers to this research question after learning from the proposed implementation sequence and participants' experiences.

The evaluation results will inform the level of effectiveness of the proposed intervention and support continuous program improvement in the future.

Chapter 5

Intervention procedure and program evaluation

Method

Sample, Participant Selection, and Site Identification

The intervention targets an IEPD-U.S. global leadership program organized by Peking University (PKU) in May 2015. This is a two-week intensive program with two credits once a year. The target participants are Chinese business executives who are enrolled in the EMBA program of PKU. The EMBA students have some characteristics in common: (a) on average 7-8 years working experience, (b) senior management or entrepreneur experience in the business organization, (c) strong interests in developing personal/organizational leadership, and (d) the second-year EMBA students.

The target participants include 31 EMBA students (N=31), who joined the IEPD-U.S. global leadership program in May 2015 and agreed to join this research project by signing the informed consent form. As shown in Table 9 listed in the appendices, the students' demographic information reveals that 45.2 percent of the participants were females, and 54.8 percent were males with their age coverage from 32 to 53 years old. The participant group represents diverse career functions and job levels, with 71 percent coming from general management roles and 71 percent from a president/chief executive level. Their respective industry backgrounds cover broad fields with over 20 percent of students coming from banking and financial services as well as IT industries respectively. As for company ownership, over 74 percent were from private companies and only 12.9 percent from foreign-owned and Chinese state-owned enterprises respectively.

Selection procedures. First, the program instructor communicated with the second-year EMBA students about the IEPD program outline including the new reflective learning module in a program communication session before the course registration. The instructor integrated the individual and collaborative reflection learning design in the course outline, which was sent to students for course registration. Second, the academic department sent out the course registration form to all second-year EMBA students to ensure equal enrollment opportunity. EMBA students registered for this program based on their self-interests to the global leadership topic. The program selected students based on three criteria, (a) registered EMBA students in the EMBA program, (b) in the second-year of their EMBA study, and (c) earn two academic credits from this program. An academic department staff and the EMBA class administrator controlled the program enrollment procedure based on above participant selection criteria.

The IEPD-U.S. program was limited to no more 40 students in 2015, aiming at studying the impact of this international experiential learning program on students' global perspective development. The class administrator collected the program registration forms for registration. After the registration work, the academic department archived the program registration forms in the 2015 IEPD program files.

Control group. Shadish, Cook, and Campbell (2002) recommend the cohort control design to match treatment group with a control group, which helps reduce the selection bias between two comparison groups. The control group is 2014 IEPD-U.S. student cohort who participated in the same IEPD program one year ago. 2014 student cohort was enrolled based on the same selection criteria, from the same executive MBA degree program, took the IEPD program in the second year of their study program, and

their final program assessment scores were archived in the student academic database. The size of the 2014 cohort was also no more than 40 students. The program instructor for the two cohorts is the same one with the same program design, except the intervention treatment for 2015 cohort only. 2014 cohort's post-program reflection is used to compare with 2015 cohort's post-program reflection based on the same assessment rubric. Students' program evaluation data from both years is compared to identify if there is any improvement in the program evaluation indicators with the intervention of the blended reflection learning strategy.

Tools

Both data collection and assessment tools were used in the intervention research. Data collection tools include the observation record, WeChat online discussion board, reflection questionnaire, program evaluation survey, and students' academic database. Data assessment tools include the rubric for reflection writing and the rubric for asynchronous discussion participation. These tools are used to collect data, assess the fidelity of implementation and the outcomes of the intervention.

Observation record. The author worked as the observer to record the intervention progress in a program checklist, as shown in Table 10. The program checklist was used as a guiding tool to record the key measures of fidelity of implementation from adherence, quality of program delivery, and participant responsiveness (Dusenbury et al., 2003).

Three face-to-face class reflection sessions were organized during the field visit trip. The author recorded students' names, the date of reflection sharing, and took notes on students' reflection speech contents in an excel document.

WeChat online group discussion board. Student participation demonstrates group cohesion, which is regarded a premise of a high-quality collaborative learning community (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005). The WeChat mobile app was used as the online class discussion platform. The class administrator set up a WeChat class discussion group and students used this online space on their smartphones to join the daily asynchronous online discussion. The instructor integrated students' performance on the WeChat discussion board in students' class discussion evaluation. All student posts and responses were saved in the WeChat discussion board.

Program evaluation survey form. A program evaluation survey was developed with both Likert-type scale ratings and open-ended questions (O'Leary, 2014). The purpose is to measure students' satisfaction with and evaluation of the IEPD program. The survey took students' perspectives to measure fidelity of implementation with indicators representing the quality of program delivery (Dusenbury et al., 2003). An electronic document was also prepared for those who did not get the paper survey, as shown in the appendices.

Student reflection questionnaire. Pre-program, post-program, and follow-up reflection questionnaires were used with a same set of questions to capture students' thinking perspective changes for the intervention outcome assessment, as shown in the appendices. The pre-program reflection questionnaire was sent to students as an electronic document in email three days before the IEPD-U.S. program begins. The class administrator collected the replied reflection writing in both paper and email format on the first day of the IEPD program. The post-program reflection questionnaire was sent to students for reflection on the last day of the IEPD program. The class

administrator collected students' written reflection after they were back to China. Six months later, a follow-up reflection questionnaire was sent to the same group of students via WeChat platform. The author followed up those students to ensure the survey response during the survey collection period.

Student database. Students' background information, as extant data, was retrieved from the EMBA student database. The data include name, gender, age, industry, job function, job level, and company ownership. The data was used to describe the characteristics of intervention participants in 2015. 2014 cohort's program evaluation and post-program reflection data were also retrieved from students' database for comparison with 2015 cohort by using the same assessment rubric.

Rubric for reflection writing. A rubric for reflection writing was used to assess the written answers to the pre-program, post-program, and follow-up reflection questionnaires, as shown in Figure 2. The rubric is adapted from two dimensions of global perspective assessment, the quality of critical reflection in global perspective changes and the developmental stages of global perspectives in the cross-cultural paradoxical context. Kember et al.'s (2008) four-category critical reflection coding scheme is used to assess the quality of critical reflection. The coding scheme includes non-reflection, understanding, reflection, and critical reflection, which are corresponding to the development of global perspectives from knowledge, mindset, and behavior domains (Kember et al., 2008). Both "non-reflection" and "understanding" focus on the knowledge learning progress, "reflection" shows self-awareness that links knowledge with personal mindset changes, and "critical reflection" reflects the thinking evolvement from global mindset (being) changes to the concrete vision and even action

plans (doing). Holt and Seki's (2012) developmental model for managing paradoxes (DMMP) in the cross-cultural environment is used to assess the developmental stages of the global mindset. DMMP's five developmental stages of global mindset include denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, and adaptation/integration. With two assessment dimensions, the rubric was used to assess students' perspective development status comprehensively through their pre, post, and follow-up reflection writings.

Figure 2

Rubric for Reflection Writing

Criteria	Level of Reflection	Global Perspective Developmental Stage
Excellent (score=5)	Critical Reflection: Shows the transformation of perspective with the new integrated conceptual framework and even action plans through changing the existing perceptions.	Adaptation and integration: Global leaders shift their frames of reference to analyze problems from the other mindset; they engage in adaptive behavior and work with others to deal practically with paradoxes.
Very Good (score=4)	Reflection: Takes the conceptual knowledge in relation to personal experience or life practice.	Acceptance: Global leaders respect both alternatives, and see their own behavior in context; they can accept paradoxical tension but not necessarily know what to do.
Good (score=3)	Understanding: Demonstrates theory learning without connecting to personal experience or real applications.	Minimization: Global leaders accept both alternatives with a "both/and" mindset and strive for balance yet may minimize the less-preferred way.
Needs Improvement (score=2)	Non-reflection: Responds to the questions without attempting to connect with the theory or idea that being addressed.	Defense: Global leaders recognize the existence of "either/or" polar alternatives but prefer the one that they are most familiar or comfortable with.
Poor (score=1)	Non-reflection: Responds to the questions without attempting to connect with the theory or idea that being addressed.	Denial: Global leaders do not realize that paradoxes exist and do not recognize alternatives to their own approaches.

Rubric for class discussion participation. A discussion rubric was used to assess students' performance in the oral class reflection and WeChat written reflection, as shown in Figure 3. The rubric includes participation frequency, quality of response, and reflective thinking. Participation frequency was counted based on the discussion records under each student. The quality of response was assessed based on the content contribution to the daily discussion topics. Reflective thinking was assessed by using the four-category critical reflection scheme (Kember et al., 2008).

Figure 3

Rubric for Class Discussion

Criteria	Participation	Quality of Response	Reflective Thinking
Excellent (score 5)	Participates more frequently than required and interact collaboratively with more students.	Participation relates to the main topic and contributes with new ideas and information.	Participation shows evidence of critical reflection with thinking perspective change.
Good (score 4)	Participates in every day. Initiates and responds to other student and instructor comments.	Relates to the main topic with some supporting details	Participation shows reflective thinking related to personal experience around leadership topics.
Needs Improvement (score 2-3)	Participates at a minimum level. Only responds to instructor prompts only.	Participation clearly relates to the main topic, but with minimum details to support the discussion.	Participation shows basic understanding around leadership topics.
Poor (score 0-1)	Does not participate.	Posts minimal information with little relevancy to the topic.	Participation lacks reflective thinking around leadership topics.

Procedure

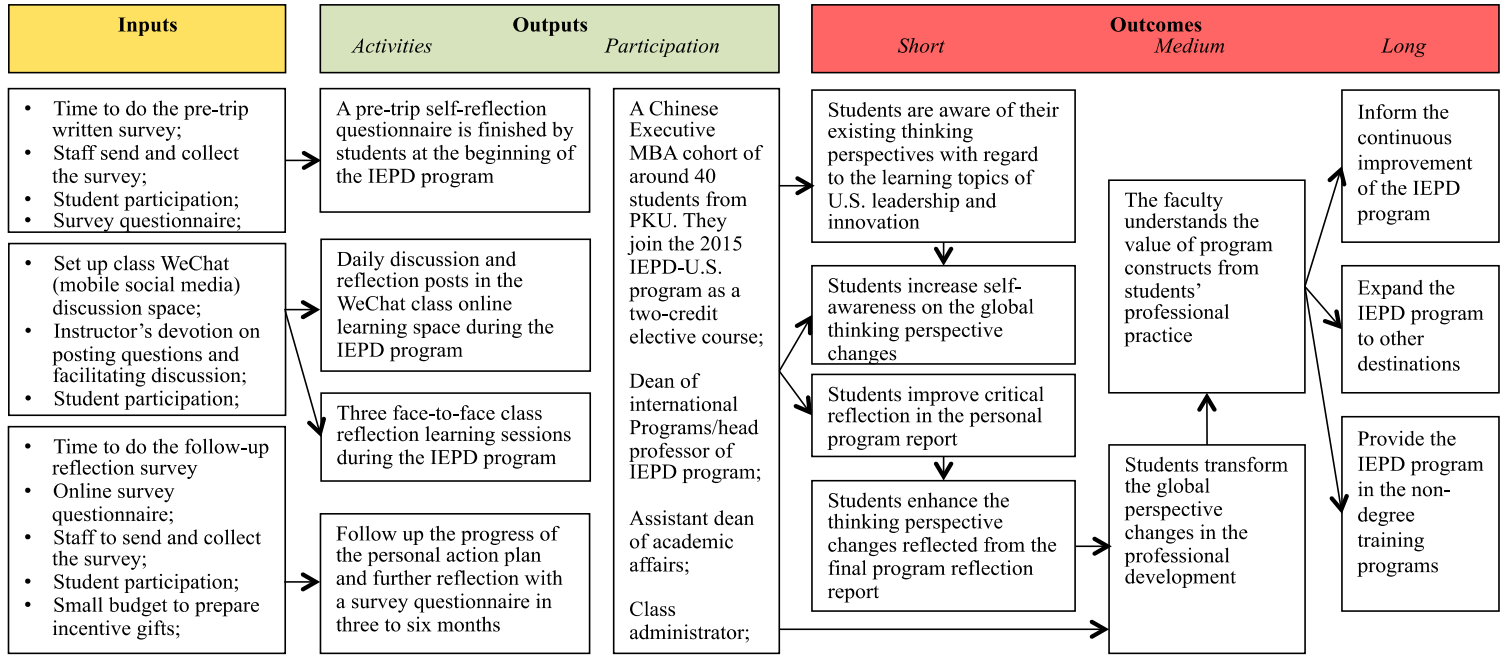
Intervention methodology. The intent of the intervention is to study whether a student collaborative learning community focused on reflective learning and practice in an experiential learning cycle of an international executive professional development (IEPD) program is able to accelerate their global perspective changes in both strategic thinking and business practice. To maximize the value of reflective learning in the student collaborative learning community, a reflective learning approach is incorporated in the IEPD-U.S. program in 2015. As shown in the intervention logic model in Figure 4, the intervention includes a critical reflection learning module with both individual and collaborative reflection practice within and between students running through and beyond the IEPD program.

Figure 4

Program Intervention Logic Model

Situation: Chinese business schools initiate international executive professional development (IEPD) programs for executive MBA (EMBA) students to cope with the challenge in effectively understanding and navigating international business practice. The intent of this study is to learn about whether the collaborative learning community strategy focused on the collaborative learning and reflection could improve students' global thinking perspective changes and the leadership practice.

Priority: (a) to develop a three-phase critical reflection framework before, during, and after the IEPD program, which aims to transform students' thinking perspectives with regard to the paradoxes in domestic and international business practices; and (b) to transform the global thinking perspectives into the concrete actions in personal leadership development beyond the IEPD program.



Assumptions
- The regular collaborative reflection modules enable students to be aware of others' thinking perspectives, compare and challenge their own perceived values and belief systems, and expand their thinking with alternative perspectives in understanding the same phenomenon;
- Acting out the conceptualized global thinking perspectives with a planned course of actions is powerful to cement the learning experience into visible personal and organizational changes.

External Factors
- The communication styles and materials of speakers;
- Explore new school/business organizations for field visit cooperation;
- Language barrier of Chinese business executives.

Intervention plan. Reflection, also called mindfulness, provides a metacognitive strategy to reflectively pay attention through self-monitoring in thinking, feelings, and actions, which link one's perceptions, assumptions and reaction to others and the situation in an experiential learning context (Tuleja, 2014). First, a pre-trip written reflection practice is completed by 2015 cohort students at the beginning of the IEPD-U.S. program. A Pre-trip reflection questionnaire includes two open-ended questions: (a) students' perceptions of U.S. business, political, educational and cross-cultural (business) leadership, (b) students' expected learning accomplishments and the follow-up actions as future global leaders. This self-reflection writing is intended to help visualize students' awareness of their existing thinking perspectives and what they expect to learn.

Second, a mobile app-supported collaborative reflection learning module is incorporated as a daily asynchronous online discussion session in the international field trip. To be free from the limit of time and space, a WeChat social media app is set up to construct an online class discussion board. This online learning format constructs a community of inquiry, in which social presence and teaching presence have positive influence on students' cognitive development (Daspit & D'Souza, 2012; Garrison et al., 2000). Social presence highlights purposeful communication in an online environment, in which group cohesion and knowledge sharing are used to characterize social presence in the community of inquiry (Daspit & D'Souza, 2012; Garrison, 2009). Group cohesion reflects the level of collaboration and participation among the participants. Knowledge sharing shows the exchange of thoughts, questions, and responses among students and the instructor. Teaching presence is characterized by instructional design and learning

facilitation (Garrison and Cleveland-Innes, 2005). This learning platform helps students review and reflect on their daily field visits to U.S. government agencies, businesses, and academic organizations. The program instructor structures daily questions regarding the field learning experiences. Students are encouraged to express their understandings and respond to others' posts with reflection.

With the pre-trip written reflection as a benchmark for their learning experience, the daily online discussion module expands students' thinking by applying different perspectives to understanding the same phenomenon, and critically reflecting on their own assumptions and beliefs. This repeated practice helps students open their minds to more possibilities, meta-cognitively attend to their different thinking perspectives, and finally integrate new perspectives into their own global thinking frameworks in the post-program reflection report.

At the end of the IEPD program, students reflect on their potential actions and implement reflective practice in the professional contexts after the IEPD program. Reflective practice is the integration of intentions and specific actions in a professional context (Schön, 1983). The IEPD program expects students to explore new ways of thinking about personal and organizational development as a result of the rich experiential learning trip. To continue students' learning cycle and propel their reflective practice after the IEPD program, the program coordinator tracks their learning impacts by a follow-up reflection questionnaire in six months after the IEPD program. The follow-up reflection questionnaire includes three outcome questions. One closed question asks about self-rating on the most valuable learning outcomes in the leadership learning dimensions. Two open-ended questions focus on the specific learning outcomes

in students' global perspective change and the impacts on their personal and professional development. This intervention transforms students' mental perspective changes into concrete practice as they further develop their attitudes and behaviors. Through the reflective practice, students are able to integrate their intentions and specific actions in their professional contexts, and visualize the concrete value connections between the program learning outcomes and their personal and professional development.

Evaluation design. The research method of this intervention study is convergent mixed methods design, in which quantitative and qualitative data are collected in parallel, analyzed separately, and then merged (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The qualitative and quantitative data are converged to bring greater insights into the effectiveness of the intervention.

To reveal the effectiveness of above intervention solution, the program evaluation includes both implementation process and intervention outcomes measures. The process of the implementation is assessed by fidelity measures. Nelson, Cordray, Hulleman, Darrow, & Sommer (2012) define fidelity of implementation as "the extent to which an intervention's core components have been implemented as planned" (p. 377). Therefore, a process evaluation answers the question: "To what extent does the reflective learning modules promotes student participation in the collaborative learning community of an IEPD program? "

The fidelity is measured by participant responsiveness and quality of program delivery. First, participant responsiveness is the extent to which participants are engaged in the activities of the program (Dusenbury et al., 2003). Students' participation is the foundation of a collaborative learning community (Garrison et al., 2000). The participant

responsiveness indicators include: (a) the completion rates of pre, post, and follow-up program reflection writing, (b) the number of student responses in the face-to-face class and online discussion sessions, and (c) the quality of student responses in the class and online reflection assessed by the rubric on class discussion. Second, quality of program delivery quality reflects how well the planned intervention is performed as evaluated by the program stakeholders (Dusenbury et al.). To assess the quality of reflection learning modules in the IEPD program, a program evaluation form is sent to students at the end of the program. Students rate the value of both face-to-face class reflection sessions and daily WeChat online discussion to their learning progress.

The outcome evaluation answers two questions, (a) to what extent reflective learning promotes global perspective changes, and (b) what are the most valuable learning outcomes of the IEPD program in promoting students' development in the professional context. The evaluation uses one-group pretest-posttest design to assess the learning outcomes of 2015 IEPD-U.S. program cohort, and uses cohort control design to match 2015 cohort with 2014 cohort in the same IEPD-U.S. program to compare their global perspective development. As recommended by Shadish et al. (2002), to enhance the validity of pretest-posttest evaluation method in quasi-experiment, the pre, post, and follow-up reflection questionnaires should be sent to students with the same set of open-ended questions.

The qualitative data is collected and categorized by thematic analysis method, and is also quantified under each category for analysis (O'Leary, 2013). As shown in Figure 2, the rubric for reflection writing is adapted from Kember et al.'s (2008) four-category critical reflection framework and Holt and Seki's (2012) developmental

model for managing paradoxes (DMMP) in the cross-cultural environment. The rubric is used to quantify students' mental development in two dimensions, the reflection quality and the developmental stage of global perspectives. Three reflection writings indicate students' global perspective changes before, right after, and a few months beyond the IEPD program. The written works are assessed with the same rubric, and the data is compared to reflect the evolvement of students' global perspective development with learning outcomes in knowledge, mindsets, and behaviors. The qualitative data on the specific learning outcomes and their impacts in the professional context are summarized and merged with the quantitative analysis result.

To further ensure the validity of the intervention outcome, a cohort controls design is used to compare 2015 cohort with 2014 cohort's post-program evaluation and reflection outcomes in the global perspective change in the same IEPD-U.S. program (Shadish et al., 2002). Matching comparison group through cohort controls is able to reduce the selection bias, since the successive cohorts share similar student enrollment requirements and go through the same learning process (Shadish et al., 2002). The 2014 cohort's student background information and learning outcome assessment records graded by the same instructor are archived in the program file, which can be used for comparison between two cohorts. As both cohorts attend the IEPD program in their second year of executive MBA (EMBA) degree program, different cohorts share the same learning experience in their EMBA programs. Therefore, the maturation threat to validity could be reduced from the student cohorts. The program director works as the instructor in both cohorts with the same program design, except the intervention treatment for 2015 cohort only. The reflection writing assessment rubric is identical in

both cohorts. The comparison results show whether students' learning outcomes on global perspective changes are overall improved with the reflective learning intervention in the 2015 cohort.

Data collection. The qualitative and quantitative data were collected to measure both program implementation process and intervention outcomes of the IEPD-U.S. program in 2015.

Data on the process evaluation. During the process of implementation, the fidelity indicators included: (a) the completion rates of pre, post, and follow-up program reflection questionnaire writing, (b) the number of student responses in the online discussion sessions, (c) the quality of student responses in the WeChat, (d) the number of student responses in the face-to-face class reflection sessions, (e) the quality of student responses in the class reflection sharing, (f) the rating of WeChat discussion value, and (g) the rating of class reflection value.

First, the reflection questionnaires were sent to the 2015 IEPD student cohort and were collected by the class administrator and program coordinator. The pre-program questionnaire was sent to students one week before the IEPD program and was collected on the first day of the program. The post-program reflection questionnaire was sent to students on the last day of the IEPD program U.S. field trip and was collected after students were back to China. The follow-up questionnaire was sent to students in six months after the IEPD program and was collected in three weeks. The program coordinator followed up with those who did not return the questionnaires with WeChat and phone call. The completion rates of the pre, post, and follow-up reflection

questionnaires were counted by the program coordinator and were recorded in the program checklist.

Second, the number of student responses and the contents of their written reflection in the WeChat discussion sessions were recorded in the WeChat platform. The data was exported to an Excel worksheet for evaluation based on the rubric for class discussion.

Third, the number of student responses and the notes of their oral reflection in the class reflection sessions were recorded by the program coordinator in an Excel worksheet for evaluation based on the rubric for class discussion.

Fourth, the value of face-to-face class reflection and WeChat discussion sessions were rated by using the program evaluation form. The evaluation data was collected on a five-point Likert-type scale with 5 = most effective and 1 = not effective at all (O' Leary, 2014). The program evaluation form was anonymous. The program coordinator sent the evaluation form to students in paper format on the last day of the IEPD-U.S. field trip, and collected by the end of the day without student identity for the confidentiality purpose.

Data on the outcome evaluation. The intervention outcomes were evaluated with four types of indicators: (a) the quality of critical reflection on global perspective changes in knowledge, mindset, and behavior, (b) developmental stage of global perspectives, (c) the most valuable learning outcomes, and (d) the impacts of the IEPD program in students' personal or professional development. Both qualitative and quantitative data were used for the outcome analysis.

First, the data on the quality of critical reflection on global perspective changes in knowledge, mindset, and behavior was collected by the pre, post, and follow-up program reflection questionnaires as narrative reflection writing. The qualitative data was categorized by Kember et al.'s (2008) four-category critical reflection coding scheme, including non-reflection, understanding, reflection, and critical reflection. These data was quantified for statistical analysis according to the program rubric for reflection writing.

Second, the data on the developmental stage of global perspectives was collected as narrative reflection writing by the pre, post, and follow-up program reflection questionnaires. The qualitative data was categorized by the DMMP model in the cross-cultural environment (Holt and Seki, 2012). The DMMP model includes five developmental stages: denial, defense, minimization, acceptation, and adaptation/integration. These categorized data were quantified for statistical analysis according to the program rubric for reflection writing.

Third, the most valuable learning outcomes were collected by both quantitative and qualitative data. The program learning outcomes were assessed by students in the program evaluation form on the last day of the IEPD program on a five-point Likert-type scale with 5 = most valuable and 1 = not valuable at all (O'Leary, 2014). The same set of evaluation on the program learning outcome was used again in the follow-up reflection questionnaire to collect students' evolved awareness on the most valuable learning outcomes. In addition, the pre, post, and follow-up program reflection questionnaires were used with the same open-ended questions to collect students'

narrative answers on what are the most valuable learning outcomes from the IEPD program.

Fourth, the data on the impacts of the IEPD program in students' development was collected by the post and follow-up reflection questionnaires with open-ended questions around the specific changes students made which were beneficial from the IEPD program learning outcomes. Students' narrative answers were categorized with thematic analysis method (O'Leary, 2014).

In addition, 2014 IEPD-U.S. cohort was used as a comparison group. Students' post-program reflections were retrieved from student database and were assessed by the same rubric for reflection writing. The result was compared with 2015 cohort on the quality of critical reflection on global perspective changes, and the developmental stage of global perspectives.

Data analysis.

Data management plan. The risk associated with survey and interview research is typically that of loss of confidentiality, discomfort in answering certain questions, and the time it takes to complete the study. The ways to minimize these risks include complete the survey anonymously and using coded data instead of names in the students' reflection writings. Confidentiality of research records is strictly maintained by assigning a code number to each participant so that data is never directly linked to individual identity. No identifiable information is included in any reports of the research published or provided to school administration.

Surveys are collected in either paper or electronic format. Survey data completed electronically is collected via WeChat. If students are unable to complete the surveys in

paper format, an electronic document is provided in the WeChat for printing or electronic reply. The program coordinator de-identifies students' names with codes. The original identity information in the WeChat is saved confidentially with a password in the computer, and the information is deleted from the WeChat platform.

All completed forms and research data are kept in a locked cabinet only accessible to the investigator. Electronic data is stored on the computer, which is password protected. Any original electronic files are erased and paper documents shredded, five years after collection. Only group data is included in publication; no individual data is ever published.

Qualitative data coding. Qualitative data is summarized by thematic analysis method (O'Leary, 2014). The qualitative data includes four indicators of outcome variables: (a) the quality of critical reflection on global perspective changes in knowledge, mindset, and behavior, (b) the developmental stage of global perspectives, and (c) the most valuable learning outcomes, and (d) the impacts of the IEPD program in students' personal or professional development.

First, the quality of critical reflection on global perspective changes is categorized by a four-category coding scheme: non-reflection, understanding, reflection, and critical reflection (Kember at al., 2008). "Non-reflection" occurs when a student responds to the questions without attempting to connect with the theory or idea that being addressed. "Understanding" demonstrates theory learning without connecting to personal experience or real applications. "Reflection" demonstrates conceptual knowledge in relation to personal experience or life practice. "Critical reflection" shows the transformation of perspective with a new integrated conceptual framework and even

action plans through changing the existing perceptions. (Kember et al., 2008; Tuleja, 2014). The qualitative data categorized with above four coding themes indicates students' overall quality of critical reflection on their global perspective changes at each learning stage. The data then can be used for the quantitative analysis.

Second, the developmental stage of global perspectives is coded by five developmental stages of DMMP model (Holt & Seki, 2012). "Denial" indicates that global leaders do not realize the existence of paradoxes and do not recognize alternatives to their own approaches. "Defense" means that global leaders recognize the existence of "either/or" polar alternatives but prefer the one that they are most familiar or comfortable with. "Minimization" indicates that global leaders accept both alternatives with a "both/and" mindset and strive for balance yet may minimize the less-preferred way. "Acceptance" indicates that global leaders respect both alternatives, and see their own behavior in context; they can accept paradoxical tension but not necessarily know what to do. "Adaptation and integration" show that global leaders shift their frames of reference to analyze problems from the other mindset; they engage in adaptive behavior and work with others to deal practically with paradoxes. With above coding themes, the qualitative data can be categorized for statistical analysis.

Third, students' self-reported most valuable learning outcomes are coded by four program learning themes: business leadership, political leadership, educational leadership, and cross-cultural business leadership. The coded data is summarized by constant comparison and thematic analysis methods (O'Leary, 2014). The results are used to converge with quantitative data to reveal the profound understanding of the most valuable learning outcomes of this IEPD program.

Fourth, students' self-reported learning impacts on their personal and professional development are coded by constant comparison and thematic analysis methods to theorize the most valuable learning impacts on students' concrete personal and professional development (O'Leary, 2014). This grounded theory approach sets up a foundation in understanding the explicit impacts of the IEPD program in the professional context.

Statistical tests.

Student background information. Students' demographic information includes name, gender, age, industry, job function, job level, and company ownership. Name is coded with a number; therefore it protects students' privacy. SPSS software is used to perform the descriptive statistical analysis on students' demographic information, which will be described in the participant profiles.

Process evaluation. Quantitative data analysis includes seven fidelity indicators: (a) the completion rates of pre, post, and follow-up program reflection questionnaire writing, (b) the number of student responses in the synchronous class reflection sessions and WeChat asynchronous online discussions, (c) the quality of student responses in both synchronous class and online reflection sharing, (d) the rating of WeChat written discussion value and class oral reflection value.

First, the completion rates of the pre-program, post-program, and follow-up reflection questionnaires were analyzed by Excel software based on the amount of questionnaires returned to the class administrator. This data explains whether the planned intervention is well attended by students.

Second, the number of student responses in the synchronous class reflection sessions and WeChat asynchronous online discussions were used to reflect the student participation performance in the collaborative learning community. The Number of student written responses on the WeChat discussion board and their oral reflection sharing in the face-to-face reflection sessions were analyzed by in the Excel worksheet. Students' responses were counted and graded between 1 and 5 based on the class discussion rubric. This data reflects the group cohesion level, meaning whether students actively present their thinking in both oral and written collaborative learning community.

Third, the quality of student responses in the WeChat asynchronous discussion sessions and class interactive reflection also reflects students' participation in their collaborative learning community. Student's responses were assessed between 1 and 5 based on the class discussion rubric. This data reflects the quality of knowledge sharing and connection to personal thinking perspective change.

Fourth, the values of both synchronous class reflection and WeChat asynchronous online discussion were rated by students on a five-point Likert-type scale. SPSS software was used to perform the frequency calculation of the distribution of all scores, from 1 = not valuable at all to 5 = most valuable. The results explain whether students recognize the value of WeChat discussion in contributing to their thinking perspective development.

Outcome evaluation. Quantitative data analysis includes four types of indicators: (a) the quality of critical reflection on global perspective changes in knowledge, mindset, and behavior, (b) the developmental stage of global perspectives, and (c) the most valuable learning outcomes, and (d) the impacts of the IEPD program in students' personal or professional development.

First, with the coding scheme of non-reflection, understanding, reflection and critical reflection, the quality of critical reflection on global perspective changes were categorized with percentage distribution. Based on the rubric on reflection writing, this indicator was graded between 1=non-reflection and 5=critical reflection. The mean scores of three reflection data sets from the pre, post, and follow-up reflection writings were calculated by SPSS. The scores were compared between the pretest and posttest, and between the posttest and follow-up test, with pretest scores as the control variable. The effect size was calculated by G power software. The comparison results show students' overall learning gains in global perspective change through critical reflection. The scores in the three data sets were also displayed in percentage to indicate students' learning evolvement in each score level.

Second, the developmental stage of global perspectives was assessed according to the rubric of reflection writing in the pre-program, post-program, and follow-up reflection questionnaires. Holt and Seki's (2012) five developmental stages of DMMP model were used as assessment tools with score from 1=denial to 5=adaptation and integration. SPSS was used to perform frequency statistics on the distribution of each developmental stage, and all three data sets were compared to reveal students' global perspective thinking evolvement from pretest to posttest and follow-up test. The mean scores and their standard deviations of pre, post, and follow-up reflection writings were calculated by SPSS, and their effect sizes were calculated by G power software. The results show students' mindset changes along the five global perspective developmental stages. In addition, the post-program reflection of the 2014 cohort was analyzed with the same rubric for reflection writing. The results were used as a control variable to compare with

2015 cohort with treatment intervention to reveal any positive change as a result of the reflective learning intervention.

Third, the most valuable learning outcomes were assessed by students based on the four program learning outcomes in business leadership, political leadership, educational leadership, and cross-cultural business leadership. The quantified data was analyzed by SPSS software to show the distribution percentage of each category. The comparison between the post-program and the follow-up reflection writing captured whether the action with reflection further improve students' learning outcomes. This data was supplemented by the qualitative learning outcome data to show greater insights on the most valuable learning outcomes in global perspective changes in knowledge, mindset, and behavior.

Lastly, the impacts of the IEPD program in students' professional development were quantified with percentage after being categorized with grounded theory approach (O'Leary, 2014). The statistical results under the summarized learning impact categories demonstrated the most frequent learning impacts as a result of the IEPD international experiential learning program. This result helps the program to understand its practical value in changing personal attitudes and behaviors, and therefore guiding the further program improvement.

Summary Matrix

Figure 5 outlines a summary matrix between evaluation questions, variable indicators, and data gathering methods.

Figure 5

Matrix between Evaluation Questions, Variables, and Data Gathering Methods

Data gathering approach	RQ1: To what extent does the blended reflective learning strategy promote student participation in the collaborative learning community of an IEPD program? (Process)	RQ2: To what extent does reflective learning promotes global perspective changes? (Outcome)	RQ3: What are the most valuable learning outcomes of the IEPD program in promoting students' development in the professional context? (Outcome)
Pre-program reflection questionnaire	• Pre-program reflection writing completion rate (Quan)	• Pre-program quality of critical reflection on the global perspective changes • Pre-program developmental stages of global perspectives (Quan+Qual)	• Self-reported learning expectations before the IEPD program (Qual)
Reflective learning session assessment	• Number of student responses in WeChat discussion board (Quan) • Quality of student responses in WeChat discussion and reflection (Quan) • Number of student responses in class oral reflection sharing (Quan) • Quality of student responses in class oral reflection sharing (Quan)		
Post-program reflection questionnaire	• Post-program reflection writing completion rate (Quan)	• Post-program quality of critical reflection on global perspective changes • Post-program developmental stages of global perspectives (Quan+Qual)	• Self-reported most valuable learning outcomes at the end of the IEPD program (Qual)
Program evaluation survey	• Value of WeChat written discussion and reflection (Quan) • Value of face-to-face oral reflection (Quan)		• Self-assessed most valuable learning outcomes at the end of the IEPD program (Quan)

Follow-up reflection questionnaire	• Follow-up reflection writing completion rate (Quan)	• Follow-up quality of critical reflection on global perspective changes • Follow-up developmental stages of global perspectives (Quan+Qual)	• Self-reported most valuable learning outcomes in practice (Quan+Qual)
2014 IEPD Post-program reflection writing		• Compare 2015 with 2014 post-program reflection writing on the quality of critical reflection and the stage of global perspective changes (Quan+Qual)	

Chapter 6

Findings and Conclusion

Evaluation Results

Fidelity of Implementation Process

The fidelity of implementation measure intends to answer the research question: "To what extent does the planned reflective learning practice in the collaborative learning community promote student participation in the IEPD program?" Fidelity was measured by participant responsiveness and the quality of program delivery, as shown in the program checklist in Table 10 (Dusenbury et al., 2003).

Table 10

2015 IEPD-U.S. Program Checklist

Indicators	Result	Notes	Fidelity
The pre-program reflection questionnaire completion rate	90.3%	28 students completed pre-program reflection	Low=less than 60%; Mid=60-80%; High=80-100%;
The post-program reflection questionnaire completion rate	96%	30 students completed post-program reflection	Low=less than 60%; Mid=60-80%; High=80-100%;
The follow-up reflection questionnaire completion rate	80.6%	25 students completed follow-up reflection	Low=less than 60%; Mid=60-80%; High=80-100%;
Number of student response in the WeChat discussion	78	28 students respond (90.3%), average 2.79 responses/ person	Low=less than 60% of students; Mid=60%-80% High=more than 80% of students;
Number of student response in the synchronous class reflection sessions	44	31 students respond (100%), average 1.42 responses/ person	Low=less than 60% of students; Mid=60%-80% High=more than 80% of students;

Quality of student response in WeChat discussions	4.23	M=4.23	Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 Low = score less than 4 High = score greater than or equal to 4
Quality of student response in class reflection sessions	4.04	M=4.04	Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 Low = score less than 4 High = score greater than or equal to 4
Value of WeChat discussion	4.71	31 completed evaluation surveys.	Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 Low = score less than 4 High = score greater than or equal to 4
Value of class reflection sharing	4.81	31 completed evaluation surveys	Rating: 1 2 3 4 5 Low = score less than 4 High = score greater than or equal to 4

Completion rates of program reflection questionnaire writing. The pre-program reflection questionnaire was conducted one week before the start of the IEPD-U.S. program, and students' reflection pieces were collected on the first day of the program. The completion rate of the pre-program reflection writing is 90.3 percent. EMBA students finished the post-program reflection work when they went back to Peking University. The post-program reflection completion rate is 96 percent. The follow-up reflection questionnaire was sent to students via WeChat in December 2015, six months after the IEPD program. The completion rate is 80.6 percent. There was 19.4 percent who did not return the follow-up reflection questionnaire. The follow-up communication shows that 6.5 percent of students had no time to reply within the required time frame, and the other 12.9 percent were out of touch. In general, the statistical results of the reflection completion rates are over 80 percent, which adheres to the program plan with high fidelity.

The number of student responses. The number of student responses in the face-to-face class reflection and the WeChat online discussion sessions reflects student participation in the collaborative learning community, as shown in Table 10. The number of student responses in the WeChat online discussion achieved 78 posts contributed by 28 students, with an average of 2.79 responses per person. The number of student responses in the synchronous class reflection sessions also amounted to 44 records, participated by 31 students, with an average of 1.42 responses per person. Students' responses on the WeChat discussion board are 1.77 times more than the number of class reflection.

However, the number of discussion posts contributed in each WeChat discussion session was uneven, ranging from 2 to 17 posts as shown in Table 11. The reasons behind this situation are reflected from students' further descriptive feedback, as shown in Table 13. First, the daily online reflection session began from 8 o'clock in the evening, which was late for students to keep working after a full day of learning experiences. Second, some evening cultural events scheduled by students were in conflict with the online reflection work, which to some extent distracted students' attention. Third, the online discussion sessions were gradually limited to several opinion leaders. Other students posted less but reported that they enjoyed reading posts.

Table 11

2015 Program WeChat Online Discussion Response Summary

In total: 78 responses

Day	Learning session	Posts
Sunday	Session 1	17
Monday	Session 2	14
Tuesday	Session 3	5
Wednesday	Session 4	16
Thursday	Session 5	5
Saturday	Session 6	2
Monday	Session 7	4
Tuesday	Session 8	6
Wednesday	Session 9	9

The quality of student responses. The quality of student responses in the WeChat discussion board and face-to-face class reflection was graded based on the discussion rubric. The assessment result shows that the mean score of WeChat reflection is 4.23 (M=4.23), and the mean score of class reflection session is 4.04 (M=4.04). The overall scores of students' response quality are greater than or equal to score 4.0, which shows high fidelity.

The quality of program delivery. The value of WeChat discussion and class reflection were both highly recognized by students with all ratings achieving 4 and above, as shown in Table 12. There was 71 percent of students who rated 5 on WeChat discussion with the mean of 4.71. About 80.6 percent of students rated 5 on class reflection sessions with the mean of 4.81. As a new method being introduced to the IEPD-U.S. program, WeChat online discussion got high recognition by the participating students. The existing face-to-face reflection also got higher evaluations compared with the mean evaluation score of 4.19 in the 2014 IEPD-U.S. program. The evaluation

results demonstrate the high value of the blended reflection methods with both online and face-to-face class interactions.

Table 12

2015 Program Evaluation on the Reflection Learning Methods

	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
WeChat Online Reflection	0%	0%	0%	29%	71%	4.71
Face-to-face Reflection session	0%	0%	0%	19.4%	80.6%	4.81

Note: 5=very effective; 4=effective; 3=good to have; 2=not effective; 1=not effective at all

Students' comments further identify the values of WeChat discussion method. As shown in Table 13, about 81 percent of student feedback regarded WeChat as innovative, interactive, efficient, and profound in reflection and sharing. Students made comments from different perspectives. As an innovative learning tool: "WeChat is new in supporting learning and reflection. I experienced curiosity, refusal, and finally fall in love with WeChat during the learning process. It helps a lot in digesting what we learned every day." Compared with class reflection: "Class reflection is very efficient, open, and interactive. WeChat reflection is more systematic and profound. Professor's inspiration and classmates' sharing help me reflect on my thinking perspective." Students who contributed fewer posts also commented that: "…Even I participated less than many other classmates, I enjoyed reading all WeChat discussion posts and learned a lot from all peers." These comments portray the benefits enjoyed by the variety of participants.

Table 13

2015 Students' Feedback on the WeChat Discussion Method

	Evaluations	Percentage of feedback
Pros	• Innovative method in education practice; • Great user experience; • Share learning with each other in the class learning community; • Be able to record real-time flash ideas; • Timely interactions and feedback between students • Wrap up new learning and reflection in an efficient manner; • Enhance structured self-reflection writing after deep information processing in the mind;	81%
Cons	• The WeChat discussion sessions opened late every day; • Some cultural and leisure events distracted students' concentration on learning reflection work; • Some opinion leaders engaged in online discussion proactively, while others read quietly but posted less.	19%

Based on the data finding, the program implementation process demonstrates overall high fidelity. However, more work needs to focus on encouraging equal student participation and more structured online reflection on the WeChat learning community.

Learning Outcome Evaluation

The outcome evaluation answered two research questions, including (a) "to what extent does reflective learning promote global perspective changes?" and (b) "what are the most valuable learning outcomes of the IEPD program in promoting students' development in the professional context?"

Effect size expresses the magnitude of intervention impact between the treatment and control groups. To understand whether an effect size result is significant, Hill,

Bloom, Black, and Lipsey (2008) assert that the effect size can be benchmarked with relevant empirical research that has similar interventions or target samples. Several selected empirical studies demonstrate effect size by using a pretest-posttest evaluation method, in which the two samples consist of paired subjects as a dependent variable, and serve as their own control (Lipsey, 1998). Tuleja's (2014) research assessed MBA students' reflection quality on an international experiential learning program. The statistical results were used to calculate the effect size, which was ES=0.5445 by using mean and standard deviation data. Kingston, Moghaddam, and Beckley's (2014) empirical research was focused on the effect of a professional training program through pre, post, and follow-up reflection questionnaires. The effect size was calculated based on its statistical results, which revealed that the effect size between pre and post training is as large as 0.8338 (ES=0.8338), but the effect size between post and follow-up training is as small as 0.2 (ES=0.2). Past empirical research provides a benchmark of effect size ranging from 0.2 to 0.8338 in the similar types of training programs. With this benchmark, students' reflection writings were assessed on their reflection quality and global perspective developmental stage.

The quality of critical reflection. Based on Kember et al.'s (2008) four-category critical reflection scheme, the assessment results show that the mean score of pre-program critical reflection quality is 2.964 (M=2.964), the post-program reflection mean score is 3.667 (M=3.667), and the follow-up reflection mean score is 3.88 (M=3.88), as shown in Table 14.

By using G power software, the calculation result indicates that the effect size between pre and post-program reflections is ES=0.94, which demonstrates the

significant value of the blended online and onsite reflection methods in promoting students' learning transformation in knowledge, mindsets, and actions comparing to the past research. The effect size between the post and follow-up reflection quality is ES=0.25, which is smaller but still demonstrates further effect through students' independent professional practices in the past six months since the end of the IEPD program.

The sub-category analysis indicates that in the pre-program reflection, only 14.3 percent of students achieved "reflection" level by linking their understandings of global leadership with personal experiences, perceptions, and questions. After the IEPD program, a majority of students achieved reflection (50 percent) and critical reflection (13.3 percent) level in the post-program reflection, which demonstrates a significant improvement on transforming students' individual thinking frameworks with personal connections and even actions. The follow-up reflection survey further encouraged students to reflect in action, which visualized the concrete value connections between the program learning outcomes and their profession development. The assessment results show that the amount of students who achieved critical reflection level increased from 13.3 percent in the post-program reflection to 20 percent in the follow-up reflection in six months. These results visualize solid learning progress in global perspective changes benefited from reflective practice during and after the IEPD program.

Table 14

Comparison between 2015 Pre, Post, and Follow-up Reflection Quality

Category	Non-reflection	Understanding	Reflection	Critical Reflection	Mean
Pre-program reflection	17.9%	67.9%	14.3%	0%	2.964
Post-program reflection	10%	26.7%	50%	13.3%	3.667
Follow-up reflection	8%	28%	44%	20%	3.880

In addition, the 2014 IEPD-U.S. cohort's post-program reflection was used to compare with the 2015 cohort. As shown in Table 15, the statistical result reveals that overall 63.3 percent of students from the 2015 cohort achieved reflection (50 percent) and critical reflection (13.3 percent). In the 2014 cohort, overall 36.7 percent reached reflection (26.7 percent) and critical reflection (10 percent) categories. This finding demonstrates the effects of reflective learning intervention on transforming students' thinking perspectives with personal connections and actions.

Table 15

Comparison between 2014 and 2015 Post-program Reflection Quality

Category	Non-reflection	Understanding	Reflection	Critical Reflection
2015 post-program reflection	10%	26.7%	50%	13.3%
2014 post-program reflection	8.8%	61.8%	23.5%	5.9%

The developmental stage of global perspectives. Based on Holt and Seki's (2012) DMMP model, the learning outcome assessment result shows that the mean score of the pre-program global perspective developmental stage is 2.714 (M=2.714), the post-program mean score is 3.333 (M=3.333), and the follow-up mean is 3.56

(M=3.56), as shown in Table 16. The effect size between the pre and post global perspective developmental stage is ES=0.84, which shows substantial progress in students' global perspective development. The effect size of the follow-up global perspective development is only ES=0.27; however, this result indicates the sustainable impact of the IEPD learning experiences even beyond the end of the learning program through independent reflective practices.

The sub-category comparison shows that 10 percent of students reached the adaptation and integration stage in their post-program reflection, and this number further moved up to 16 percent in the follow-up reflection. The number of students who developed their global perspectives to the acceptance stage moves from 10.7 percent before the IEPD program to 32 percent after this program. These changes demonstrate their openness to the paradox situations and respect to alternatives in particular contexts. In contrast, the students who were categorized in the defense stage declined from 39.3 percent before the IEPD program to 8 percent after the program. The comparison demonstrates positive global perspective changes from defense to minimization and acceptation with opening mindsets.

Table 16

Comparison between 2015 Pre, Post, and Follow-up Global Perspective Developmental Stages

Category	Denial	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation/ Integration	Mean
Pre-program reflection	0%	39.3%	50%	10.7%	0%	2.714
Post-program reflection	0%	10%	56.7%	23.3%	10%	3.333
Follow-up reflection	0%	8%	44%	32%	16%	3.560

In addition, as shown in Table 17, the comparison between 2014 and 2015 IEPD-U.S. cohort shows that overall 33.3 percent of students from 2015 cohort achieved acceptance (23.3 percent) and adaptation (10 percent) stage. In the 2014 cohort, only 20.6 percent from 2014 cohort achieved acceptance (14.7 percent) and adaptation (5.9 percent) stage. This 13 percent of the achievement gap between these two cohorts demonstrates the validity of the treatment intervention in promoting students' global perspective development in 2015 cohort.

Table 17

Comparison between 2014 and 2015 Post-program Global Perspective Developmental Stages

Category	Defense	Minimization	Acceptance	Adaptation and Integration
2015 Post-program reflection	10%	56.7%	23.3%	10%
2014 Post-program reflection	14.7%	64.7%	14.7%	5.9%

The most valuable learning outcomes. Students' self-assessed learning outcomes are based on the four global leadership learning domains, including business leadership, political leadership, educational leadership, and cross-cultural (business) leadership. As shown in Table 18, the post-program self-assessment result shows that more than 93.5 percent of students reported overall valuable learning outcomes (scales 4 and 5) in all learning domains. The follow-up self-assessment result continues this tendency with 95.7 percent of students regarding their learning outcomes as valuable (scale 4 and 5) in these four categories. However, the comparison between sub-categories reveals that the business leadership domain got a higher rating as the

most valuable learning outcome (scale 5) in the follow-up self-assessment than in the post-program assessment (75 percent versus 71 percent). Comparatively, the other three domains got lower ratings. This difference shows that a gap exists between thinking and doing. Through six-month practice, students took actions to examine the acquired knowledge, change practices with new thinking perspectives and discard those that do not benefit their business development. Therefore, although some learned conceptual tools were believed to be inspirational during the learning program, the concepts may be regarded less valuable if students find little opportunities to link knowledge with their professional practices. The above statistical changes reveal the indispensable role of reflective practice in the experiential learning model (Kolb, 1984; Schön, 1983).

Table 18

Comparison between 2015 Post and Follow-up Learning Outcome Self-assessment

Scale 4+5	American business leadership	Educational leadership development	Cross-cultural business leadership	Political leadership
Post-program self-assessment	93.5%	100%	100%	93.5%
Follow-up self-assessment	100%	100%	95.8%	95.7%

Note: 5 = most valuable; 4 = valuable; 3 = neutral; 2 = not valuable; 1 = not valuable at all

Scale 5	**American business leadership**	Educational leadership development	Cross-cultural business leadership	Political leadership
Post-program self-assessment	**71%**	87.1%	74.2%	77.4%
Follow-up self-assessment	**75%**	70.8%	58.3%	56.5%

Students' post-program and follow-up reflection writing reflect their learning outcomes in specific global perspective changes. Being categorized in knowledge,

mindset, and behavior changes, students' learning outcomes reflect their knowledge gains in global leadership character, competencies, and business globalization lessons and experiences. Students learned to jump out of their fixed mindsets with alternative thinking perspectives to examine the core competitiveness of their businesses, to develop personal competencies with confidence, and to think about integrating eastern and western thinking perspectives into a more holistic global mindset. The quantified results reflect a significant change in behavior learning from the post-program reflection (2.5 percent) to the follow-up reflection (23.8 percent) in six months, as shown in Table 19. All behavior changes reported in the follow-up reflection are around business leadership development. This finding resonates with the above follow-up self-assessment result, which places business leadership development (75 percent) on top of the other three learning domains through reflective practice in students' professional contexts.

Table 19

Comparison between the 2015 Post and Follow-up Learning outcome Reflection on global perspective changes

	Knowledge	Mindset	**Behavior**
Post-program self-assessment	62%	35.5%	**2.5%**
Follow-up self-assessment	37.5%	40.5%	**23.8%**

The impacts of the IEPD program. The learning impacts reported in the follow-up reflection questionnaires were categorized based on the grounded theory approach (O'Leary, 2014). The qualitative data was initially generated with coded

themes. The themes were then conceptualized with patterns through a process of constant comparison. As shown in Table 20, the analysis result reveals six categorized learning impacts, including strategic thinking perspective, business globalization orientation, personal leadership development, corporate culture, business innovation, and life-long learning.

Table 20

Learning Impacts of the 2015 IEPD-U.S. Program

Category	Attitude	Behavior	Sub-total
Strategic thinking perspective	Open mindset with alternative thinking perspectives, higher vision, deeper insights, and bigger picture	Layout and execute strategic plan for solving problems, IPO, and business re-organization	29.2%
Business globalization orientation	Globalization orientation: sense of global business development; growing confidence	Plan and implement global investment and asset allocation	27.1%
Leadership development	Believe in responsibility, integrity, persistence, and positive energy. Personal value system impacts	Personal Leadership development in vision，passion，trust，and execution	18.7%
Corporate culture	Value more tolerant and inclusive corporate culture	Promote social responsibility in corporate culture	8.4%
Business innovation	Encourage innovation	Design new business models	8.3%
Life-long Learning	Life experience		8.3%

The quantified data shows that 56.3 percent of the learning impacts indicate strategic thinking perspective development (29.2 percent) and the sense of business globalization (27.1 percent). These impacts resonate with the ultimate goal of the IEPD

program in preparing globally focused strategic thinkers and business leaders who can understand and adapt to multiple thinking perspectives in the globalized markets. Business leaders must get themselves and their organizations prepared for this change with personal leadership development (18.7 percent), favorable corporate culture (8.4 percent), and business innovations (8.3 percent). Warrick (2011) regards these conditions as necessary components of transformational leadership in connection with organizational development. With the purpose of driving system level change, this operational leadership framework includes championing change and transforming organization as core components of transformational leadership in addition to personal characteristics of the leaders. Under this leadership framework, the reported impacts on corporate culture and business innovation are inseparable driving forces to implement organizational change.

The above findings demonstrate a significant system impact from personal development to the visible business changes. However, since students are in different stages of their personal and business development, the learning experiences may not have equal impacts on students' attitudes and behaviors. About 8.3 percent of the reported impacts were around life-long learning. Students believed that the learning experiences were valuable and helped them develop deeper insights on the different culture and society. However, they have no opportunities yet to implement what they learned. A student commented "…Although I have not found the connection between what I learned and my work, I believe it will be my treasure. I will keep it in my memory to wait for the right opportunity…" No matter the learning impacts were significant or not, this finding demonstrates critical value of action in examining the

visible impacts of the acquired knowledge and experiences.

Conclusion

Summative Statements

In summary, the three intervention research questions find their answers based on the evaluation results. The results demonstrate that the blended reflective learning intervention before, during, and after the IEPD program accelerates students' reflection quality and global perspective development in their professional practices.

The first question was intended to understand whether the blended reflective learning strategy in the collaborative learning community promote student participation in the IEPD program. The findings from the implementation process show high fidelity of implementation. In both WeChat online discussion and in-class reflection sessions, students achieved in total 121 response posts, which is nearly three times as many compared with classroom only reflection (43 students responses). Evaluations also reflect the high quality of both reflection methods. The findings indicate that the blended reflection learning methods, with new technology-based WeChat online discussion and face-to-face reflection, effectively promote student participation in the IEPD program.

The second question intends to reveal whether the reflective learning intervention in the collaborative learning community promotes students' global perspective changes. The outcome assessment results in both reflection quality and global perspective developmental stage reflect significant learning progress through pre-post reflection comparison. This finding demonstrates the value of the blended reflection methods with both online and face-to-face sessions in promoting students' learning transformation in knowledge, mindset, and action. Compared with the post-program learning outcomes,

the follow-up reflection shows smaller effect size on reflection quality (ES=0.25) and global perspective development (ES=0.27). Considering that the follow-up reflection was made during students' independent practice in their workplace, the comparison results under each assessment category do reflect the reinforced learning outcomes during the six months since the end of the IEPD program. In addition, the comparison between 2015 (treatment) and 2014 (control) cohort further demonstrates the value of the blended reflective learning intervention in improving students' critical reflection and their global perspective changes. Therefore, the learning outcome assessment findings prove the value of the reflective learning strategy in promoting students' global perspective changes.

The last research question aims to reveal the most valuable learning outcomes and impacts on students' professional development. Both quantitative and qualitative results show that students regard the business leadership development domain as the most valuable learning outcome area. The comparison between the post and follow-up reflection shows that the most significant learning gain lies in behavior changes after the six-month reflective practice. This finding reveals the importance of post-program practice in transforming the acquired knowledge and thinking in the situated learning context (Gee, 2008). As reported by students, the learning impacts are classified in strategic thinking perspective, business globalization orientation, personal leadership development, corporate culture, and business innovation. These five categories of learning impacts not only respond to the ultimate goals of the IEPD program but also reflect the key fields of interests that the business leaders could execute in their business practice.

Overall, the program evaluation demonstrates the effectiveness of the blended reflection learning methods in improving the IEPD program design and accelerating business executives' global perspective development. The findings indicate that overseas field learning experiences cannot turn into solid value until the learner internalizes the experiences with personal meaning construction through continuous reflection before, during, and after the IEPD program. These three learning steps constitute a reflective learning cycle that could help students decode learning experiences with personal learning transformation to their professional development. As Kolb and Kolb (2009) assert, this cyclical learning process is an experiential learning spiral, which has a transformational power to guide people's life-long development. Learning transformation is not limited to one program itself, but serves as the beginning of another round of experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation cycle.

Recommendations

With the proven value of the reflection learning cycle, the evaluation results also indicate some areas that need further improvement in the future IEPD program design. First, the gap in the numbers of WeChat daily responses indicates an unbalanced student engagement. Based on students' feedback, the program management team needs to refine the online reflection design with respect to the unique online learning environment and the intensity of the learning schedule. Besides, the mindfulness skill training will be needed to facilitate students' reflection learning at the beginning of the IEPD program. Polanyi (1958) and Mclnerney (2002) argue that tacit knowledge holds people back from accepting new ideas and thinking perspectives. Honig, Venkateswaran, McNeil, and Twitchell (2014) further assert that the perceived understandings make

people tend to interpret new thinking in their fixed thinking frameworks rather than against their prior knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary to provide students with mindset development tools to facilitate their thinking and behavior changes.

Second, the learning impact analysis reflects that 8.3 percent of students reported unclear learning impacts in their professional development. This situation is within the radar map of the program learning impacts, due to the different experience and business backgrounds of students. However, as an education program, the school should not ignore this learning gap, since learning transformation cannot be accomplished in one stroke. Based on the new science of learning, learning is a continuous process as a spiral, with reciprocal interactions between field experiences and conceptual knowledge (Alexander, Schallert, & Reynolds, 2009; Kolb & Kolb, 2009). Therefore, the IEPD program acts as a gateway to open the global business environment to the Chinese executives. To propel students with further insights and actions on their professional development, a follow-up community of practice will help the program and students realize continued interaction on idea posting, experience sharing, and problem discussion (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Through this collaborative learning process, with shared business resources, students could synthesize and multiply the intellectual ideas to generate new solutions. This collaborative learning community may benefit students at different moments on their paths of professional development; however, this mutual scaffolding and reflective learning process will facilitate their transformation in the near future.

Limitations of the Study

This study is focused on strengthening business executives' global perspectives through a three-stage reflective learning framework before, during, and after the international experiential learning program. The evaluation findings demonstrate strong intervention effects; however, several limitations should be kept in mind for the future program improvement.

First, this study is focused on one IEPD-U.S. program, which is organized once a year with limited numbers of participants. The small size of data is expected to be expanded to other IEPD programs in the future, which will contribute a larger amount of data in enhancing internal and external validity across various groups and settings.

Second, to strengthen the validity of the intervention outcome, matching comparison group through cohort controls can reduce the selection bias, since the successive cohorts share similar student enrollment requirements and go through the same learning process (Shadish et al., 2002). However, since the pretest data of the IEPD program was collected for the first time due to this pre, post, and follow-up reflection learning intervention, there was no past pretest data for comparison. Therefore, posttest statistical conclusion validity of the comparison cohorts will be strengthened in the future if the pretest reflection of the control and treatment groups in the successive years can be compared with similar levels. With the control of pretest data in the past IEPD program, the selection bias is expected to be reduced with pretest control by using cohort matching design (Shadish et al.).

Finally, the IEPD program aims to facilitate a complex transformation process with interactions between the learner and the field learning experiences. Based on the

needs assessment findings, the field learning experience is another focus for future study. The concrete learning experience is the beginning of an experiential learning cycle, which sets up a foundation for deeper insights and critical reflection (Kolb, 1984). Therefore, the potential intervention to the concrete learning experience is expected to stretch thinking perspectives with hands-on experience and comparison, paving the way for the action-oriented critical reflection and behavior change.

Appendices

Table 1

2014 Student Cohort's Demographic Information

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	7	20.6	20.6	20.6
	Male	27	79.4	79.4	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

Nationality

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	China	32	94.1	94.1	94.1
	Singapore	1	2.9	2.9	97.1
	United States	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

Ownership

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Foreign-owned/ Joint venture	6	17.6	17.6	17.6
	Private	20	58.8	58.8	76.5
	State-owned	8	23.5	23.5	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

Function

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Accounting/finance	1	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Administration	3	8.8	8.8	11.8
	General Management	27	79.4	79.4	91.2
	Marketing/sales	1	2.9	2.9	94.1
	Public Relations	1	2.9	2.9	97.1
	Research/development	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

Industry

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Auto Industry	1	2.9	2.9	2.9
	Banking, Security, and other Financial services	6	17.6	17.6	20.6
	Culture, Education, Training	4	11.8	11.8	32.4
	Electronics	1	2.9	2.9	35.3
	Investment	3	8.8	8.8	44.1
	IT/Telecom/Electronics	5	14.7	14.7	58.8
	Law	1	2.9	2.9	61.8
	Manufacturing	6	17.6	17.6	79.4
	Medical	1	2.9	2.9	82.4
	Petroleum	1	2.9	2.9	85.3
	Real Estate, construction	4	11.8	11.8	97.1
	Transportation	1	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

2014 Student Cohort's Past Travel Experience in the U.S.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	17	50.0	50.0	50.0
	2	10	29.4	29.4	79.4
	3	7	20.6	20.6	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

Note: 1 = no experience; 2 = less than one month; 3 = more than two months

2014 Student's International Business Experience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	8	23.5	23.5	23.5
	2	9	26.5	26.5	50.0
	3	17	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	34	100.0	100.0	

Note:
1 = I have participated in international business development; 2 = I plan to develop international business; 3 = I have no plan to develop international business, but want to learn the different practices;

Table 9

2015 Research Participants' Demographic Information

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	14	45.2	45.2	45.2
	Male	17	54.8	54.8	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Ownership

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Foreign-owned/Joint venture	4	12.9	12.9	12.9
	Private	23	74.2	74.2	87.1
	State-owned	4	12.9	12.9	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Job Function

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Finance	1	3.2	3.2	3.2
	General management	22	71.0	71.0	74.2
	Human Resource	1	3.2	3.2	77.4
	Marketing/Sales	6	19.4	19.4	96.8
	Research/Development	1	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Job Level

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Department Head	7	22.6	22.6	22.6
	President/ Chief executive	22	71.0	71.0	93.5
	Senior management	2	6.5	6.5	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Industry

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Banking/ Financial services	8	25.8	25.8	25.8
	Construction/ Real Estate	5	16.1	16.1	41.9
	Consulting	1	3.2	3.2	45.2
	Culture/ Education	2	6.5	6.5	51.6
	Hotel	1	3.2	3.2	54.8
	HR/Executive Search	1	3.2	3.2	58.1
	IT/Telecom	7	22.6	22.6	80.6
	Manufacturing	4	12.9	12.9	93.5
	Pharmaceutical	1	3.2	3.2	96.8
	Trading	1	3.2	3.2	100.0
	Total	31	100.0	100.0	

Table 21

Statistics on 2014 Cohort's Post-program Reflection on the Learning Outcomes

Learning dimensions	Reflection	Percentage of feedback
Leadership development	Leaders should be visionary to lead the organization with clear goals.	41.2%
	Understand the value of leaders' charisma to the organization.	
	Leaders not only lead, but also behave as good listeners, participants, and followers.	
	Leaders should be professional and persistent to the goal.	
	Understand personal strengths and weaknesses.	
	Have plans to initiate self-changes.	
Cross-cultural awareness	Trust is the core competence of a company in the Cross-cultural business practice.	32.3%
	Soft powers, instead of profitability, determine the sustainability of a business.	
	Inclusiveness and transparency are the main differences between two countries, due to the different cultural roots.	
	Culture determines the social and political system of a country.	
	Chinese business leaders need to learn more about the cultural roots of the U.S. in order to have deep understanding of its business practice. It is largely absent in the existing researches.	
Chinese business globalization	Learning to follow the rules of the local business community, but not break the rules.	20.6%
	International business expansion should follow a long-term plan. Do not play the role of intruders.	
	Think more strategically about the value of a business while doing acquisitions in the international market.	
Political system	Still have little understanding about the checks and balance system.	5.9%
	The U.S. institutional practice cannot be transplanted directly into Chinese business organizations due to the difference of cultural roots. There needs more trials in the interaction with local companies.	

Table 22

Statistics on 2014 Students' Most Significant Learning Outcomes

Learning dimensions	Contents	1	2	3	4	5	(4+5)	Missing
Leadership development	To find alternative ways of developing talents into leaders of character and independent thinkers.			2.9%	26.5%	70.6%	97.1%	
Cross-cultural awareness	To be more open to the U.S. society and people from different cultural perspectives.			2.9%	32.4%	64.7%	97.1%	
Cross-cultural awareness	To rethink my identity and value proposition from my own and others' eyes.			8.8%	29.4%	61.8%	91.2%	
Leadership development	To compare leadership definition and practice in organizations between the U.S. and China.			6.1%	48.5%	45.5%	94%	1
Leadership development	To have deeper self-awareness on the leadership characteristics and development			15.2%	45.5%	39.4%	84.9%	1
Chinese business globalization	To understand key success factors and major challenges to Chinese companies operating in U.S.			26.5%	35.3%	38.2%	73.5%	
Chinese business globalization	To be able to interpret Chinese business expansion from a global perspective.			20.6%	41.2%	38.2%	79.4%	
Political system	To evaluate the value of U.S. political model under Chinese socioeconomic environment.		2.9%	20.6%	44.1%	32.4%	76.5%	
Political system	To identify the values and limitations of the U.S. political checks and balances system for the country's development.			23.5%	47.1%	29.4%	76.5%	

Note: 5= strongly agree; 4= agree; 3= neutral; 2= disagree; 1=strongly disagree

Table 23

Statistics on 2014 Students' Most Valuable Learning Experiences

	1	2	3	4	5	Overall effective (4+5)	Missing
World Bank/IFC visit			3%	6.1%	90.9%	97%	1
West Point Academy study			2.9%	29.4%	67.6%	97%	
U.S. Capitol visit with lecture			5.9%	14.7%	79.4%	94.1%	
Lecture on U.S. Economic and Social Conditions			5.9%	29.4%	64.7%	94.1%	
Leadership in Jazz Music		3%	3%	27.3%	66.7%	94%	1
Leadership Lecture by forensic scientist		3%	6.1%	27.3%	63.6%	90.9%	2
Lecture by Chinese economist			2.9%	35.3%	61.8%	97.1%	
Princeton University visit			14.3%	28.6%	57.1%	85.7%	6
High school visit		2.9%	23.5%	23.5%	50%	73.5%	
Lecture on Wall Street			17.6%	35.3%	47.1%	82.4%	
Speech on the U.S. economy recovery			11.8%	50%	38.2%	88.2%	
Lecture on Chinese companies in the USA			32.4%	32.4%	35.3%	67.7%	
Naval Academy visit		3.1%	37.5%	28.1%	31.3%	59.4%	2
Lecture on the U.S.- China economic relations		5.9%	29.4%	35.3%	29.4%	64.7%	
Sharing on Chinese business investment in the U.S.		2.9%	29.4%	41.2%	26.5%	67.7%	
Embassy visit		8.8%	32.4%	32.4%	26.5%	58.9%	
Pre-departure lecture on the U.S. politics and history		12	16	52%	20%	72%	9
Pentagon visit	3.1%		25%	53.1%	18.8%	71.9%	2
Federal department visit		5%	30%	45%	20%	65%	
U.S. news media visit		3%	33.3%	39.4%	24.2%	63.6%	1
Lecture on Leadership in Telecom		6.3%	34.4%	40.6%	18.8%	59.4%	2
Federal court visit			54.5%	36.4%	9.1%	45.5%	
Chinese electronic company visit	3%	3%	48.5%	36.4%	9.1%	45.5%	1
China real estate visit	2.9%	11.8%	41.2%	32.4%	11.8%	44.2%	
U.S. logistics company visit	6.5%	19.4%	45.2%	25.8%	3.2%	29%	3

Note: Scale: 5= very valuable; 4= valuable; 3= good to have; 2= not valuable; 1= not valuable at all

Table 24

2014 Cohort Feedback on the Most Valuable Learning Experience and Learning Outcomes

Learning experience	Learning outcomes	Learning dimensions	Percentage of feedback
World Bank/IFC visit: Chinese business going global	Understand the interdependent relations between China and the world, the need of collaboration with local market.	Chinese business globalization	42.4%
	Think out of the box of Chinese perspective, and open mind for different perspectives		
	Open the channel for potential cross-country acquisition and financial cooperation.		
	Use real cases to identify main issues encountered by Chinese companies.		
	Be aware of the value in respecting local culture and business ecology.	Cross-cultural awareness	
	Learn the importance of "soft power" and value proposition in the business development and competition.		
	Trust is paramount to individual, business organization, and the country.		
West Point Academy visit: WP way of leadership	Inspiration from WP "duty, honor, country" mission	Leadership development	24.2%
	Learn specific methods on the leadership development		
U.S. Capitol visit and lecture	Respect the Charismatic leadership of the lecturer who was former member of the House of Representative	Leadership development	15.2%
	Value the experience in learning U.S. political system in the Capitol		
Leadership through Jazz	Collaboration and organization in the team	Leadership	6.1%
	Synergy between personal leadership and the organizational leadership		
Lecture by forensic scientist	Convergence of eastern and western cultures in the business application	Cross-cultural awareness	6.1%
Lecture on U.S. Economic and social trends	Evidence-based data analysis on U.S. development trends	Methodology	3.0%
Lecture on Wall Street	Ten suggestions on business ethics	Business	3.0%

Table 25

Statistics on 2014 Students' Most Effective Learning Methods

	1	2	3	4	5	Overall effective (4+5)	Missing data
Self-introspection				40.6%	59.4%	100%	2
Discussion with professor				47.1%	52.9%	100%	
Lecture				48.5%	51.5%	100%	1
Questioning				58.8%	41.2%	100%	
Field visit			2.9%	35.3%	61.8%	97.1%	
Individual learning			8.8%	50%	41.2%	91.2%	
Reading materials			11.8%	50%	38.2%	88.2%	
Bus talk			9.4%	62.5%	28.1%	90.6%	2
Student sharing and feedback		2.9%	8.8%	67.6%	20.6%	88.2%	
Team discussion and reflection			15.6%	59.4%	25%	84.4%	2

Note: 5= very effective; 4= effective; 3= good to have; 2= not effective; 1= not effective at all

Table 26

Statistics on the 2015 Pre, Post, and Follow-up Reflection Quality

Pre-program reflection quality

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.0	5	16.1	17.9	17.9
	3.0	19	61.3	67.9	85.7
	4.0	4	12.9	14.3	100.0
	Total	28	90.3	100.0	
Missing	System	3	9.7		
Total		31	100.0		

Post-program reflection quality

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.0	3	9.7	10.0	10.0
	3.0	8	25.8	26.7	36.7
	4.0	15	48.4	50.0	86.7
	5.0	4	12.9	13.3	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

Follow-up reflection quality

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.0	2	6.5	8.0	8.0
	3.0	5	16.1	20.0	28.0
	4.0	12	38.7	48.0	76.0
	5.0	6	19.4	24.0	100.0
	Total	25	80.6	100.0	
Missing	System	6	19.4		
Total		31	100.0		

Table 27

Statistics on the 2015 Pre, Post, and Follow-up Global Perspective Developmental Stages

Pre-program global perspective developmental stage

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.0	11	35.5	39.3	39.3
	3.0	14	45.2	50.0	89.3
	4.0	3	9.7	10.7	100.0
	Total	28	90.3	100.0	
Missing	System	3	9.7		
Total		31	100.0		

Post-program global perspective developmental stage

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.0	3	9.7	10.0	10.0
	3.0	17	54.8	56.7	66.7
	4.0	7	22.6	23.3	90.0
	5.0	3	9.7	10.0	100.0
	Total	30	96.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	3.2		
Total		31	100.0		

Follow-up global perspective developmental stage

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2.0	2	6.5	8.0	8.0
	3.0	11	35.5	44.0	52.0
	4.0	8	25.8	32.0	84.0
	5.0	4	12.9	16.0	100.0
	Total	25	80.6	100.0	
Missing	System	6	19.4		
Total		31	100.0		

Table 28

2015 Students' Post-program Learning Outcome Self-assessment Results

Learning dimensions	Contents	1	2	3	4	5
Educational leadership development	Identify the features of American education practice and reflect on Chinese higher education and talent development.	0%	0%	0%	12.9%	87.1%
Political leadership	Critically discuss and reflect on its uniqueness and the most substantial challenges.	0%	0%	6.5%	16.1%	77.4%
Cross-cultural business leadership	Reflect and summarize the success factors and challenges to Chinese companies doing business in the U.S. market.	0%	0%	0%	25.8%	74.2%
American business leadership	Understand the leadership and innovation practice as well as the challenges in American enterprises.	0%	0%	6.5%	22.6%	71.0%

Note: 5=most valuable; 4=valuable; 3=neutral; 2=not valuable; 1=not valuable at all

Table 29

2015 Students' Follow-up Learning Outcome Self-assessment Results

Learning dimensions	Contents	1	2	3	4	5	Missing
American business leadership	Understand the leadership and innovation practice as well as the challenges in American enterprises.	0%	0%	0%	25%	75%	1
Educational leadership development	Identify the features of American education practice and reflect on Chinese higher education and talent development.	0%	0%	0%	29.2%	70.8%	
Cross-cultural business leadership	Reflect and summarize the success factors and challenges to Chinese companies doing business in the U.S. market.	0%	0%	4.2%	37.5%	58.3%	
Political leadership	Critically discuss and reflect on its uniqueness and the most substantial challenges.	0%	0%	4.3%	39.2%	56.5%	2

Note: 5=most valuable; 4=valuable; 3=neutral; 2=not valuable; 1=not valuable at all

Table 30

2015 Students' Post-program Learning Outcome Reflection on Global Perspective Development

	Reflective learning outcomes	Percentage
Knowledge	Empower business leadership with strategic and global vision, passion, the choice of sequencing, and action.	62%
	Leadership characters: duty, honor, society, integrity, rationality, responsibility, moral, and professionalism	
	Competence development: judgment and pursuance under the uncertainty, pressure, and challenges; hone perseverance and execution, and life-long learning ability	
	Action: redesign international business strategy, control potential risk with legal service, enhance collaborations with local businesses; introduce professional talents combined with local and international employees; understand local rules of the game and immerse business with respect to local culture and customs.	
	Value of check and balance system in power management, information transparency, and public opinion	
	The core value of education focuses on developing individuals as a human. Education works as a force to change the society into a better world, instead of merely serving the status quo.	
Mindset	Rethink self-motivation, re-energize the career development with broadened international perspectives	35.5%
	Re-examine the core competitiveness of the business with international perspectives; the direction of Chinese business development tend to be more rational and professional.	
	The relationship between individual freedom and societal order is bridged by laws and citizen's social responsibility	
	Trying to introduce the idea of check and balance system to manage the internal and external political environment of the company; restrict the power under supervision	
	Review the value of education with the questions of why (value system), what (to learn), how (to learn), and solving what problems.	
	Explore the new model of combining oriental holistic thinking with western evidence-based mindset	
Behavior	Strive for building social responsibility with self behavior change, as the first step to establish social credit system	2.5%
	Believing in the concerted effect of knowledge, practice and innovation in the corporate globalization; invest more on on-job training to the frontier human resources.	

Table 31

2015 Students' Follow-up Learning Outcome Reflection on Global Perspective Development

	Reflective learning outcomes	Percentage
Knowledge	Personal leadership: the power of integrity, moral, and inspiration	35.7%
	Learn from global leaders' being, knowledge development, principles of doing business, and management experiences in the different cultural and social context.	
	Get better understanding on the challenges, opportunities, difficulties, and achievements that the going-global businesses are facing; the importance of local immersion, respecting laws and regulations, being focused on the professional fields, and controlling the potential risks.	
	Recognize the role of legal system in the society; respect the laws and learn to protect business with laws	
	Be aware of the risks of foreign investment, and learn mainstream investment methods and channels.	
Mindset	Start changing the fixed thinking model with broader insights; analyze the problems with alternative thinking perspectives.	40.5%
	Believe in the long-term self-development with persistent value system and leadership characters.	
	Open personal insights with holistic and system thinking.	
	Find the passion and run after the dream.	
	Being persistent calm to face all people and experiences as treasure for the lifetime.	
Behavior	Fine tune the business direction, and develop greater rationality and self-confidence.	23.8%
	Follow the path to find, analyze, and solve problems; encourage innovative thinking and experiments with corresponding policy support.	
	Adjust the structure of human resources, and increase the recruitment of international professional talents.	
	Start discussing the route map to the business expansion in the international market.	
	Continue exploring the business cooperation in the foreign market; open the thinking perspective on the cross-industry collaboration.	

Appendix A

2014 Course Evaluation Form

Congratulations! You have finished this U.S. Immersion Program. This evaluation form is to learn about your self-evaluated learning experience, outcomes, and evaluation on course effectiveness. This survey is anonymous and will be used for course improvement only, so please feel free to give us your precious feedback. Thank you!

1. Have you ever traveled to the U.S.? How long did you stay there?

_____

2. Are you involved in international business development?

1) I have been involved in international business development;
2) I plan to be involved in developing international business;
3) I have no plan to develop international business, but want to learn different practices;

3. Can you communicate in English?

1) Fluent; 2) beginner; 3) No

4. How do you evaluate your learning and development AFTER this course?

(Please use 1-5 scale to indicate your level of agreement with each statement.
5= very effective; 4= effective; 3= neutral; 2= less effective; 1=not effective at all)

To compare leadership definition and practice in organizations between the U.S. and China.	1	2	3	4	5
To find alternative ways of developing talents into leaders of character and independent thinkers.	1	2	3	4	5
To have deeper self-awareness on the topic of leadership	1	2	3	4	5
To understand key success factors and major challenges to Chinese companies in doing business in the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
To interpret Chinese business expansion from a global perspective.	1	2	3	4	5
To identify the values and limitations of the U.S. political checks and balances system for the country's development.	1	2	3	4	5
To evaluate and critique the value of U.S. model of governance under Chinese socioeconomic environment.	1	2	3	4	5
To be more open to the U.S. society and people from different cultural perspectives.	1	2	3	4	5
To rethink my identity and value proposition from my own and others' eyes.	1	2	3	4	5
Overall speaking, I achieved my personal learning goals.	1	2	3	4	5
Others, please specify	1	2	3	4	5

5. What are the most valuable learning experiences in this international immersion program? What are the most important personal learning outcomes you achieved through this course?

6. Please evaluate whether the following learning experiences are valuable in achieving your learning goals?

(Please use 1-5 scale to indicate your level of agreement with each statement. 5= very valuable; 4= valuable; 3= good to have; 2= not valuable; 1= not valuable at all.)

Pre-departure lecture on the U.S. politics and history	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture on Wall Street	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture on Leadership in Telecom industry	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture on Chinese companies in the USA	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture by Chinese economist	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture by forensic scientist	1	2	3	4	5
Chinese electronic company visit	1	2	3	4	5
Leadership through Jazz Music	1	2	3	4	5
West Point Academy: leadership	1	2	3	4	5
News media visit	1	2	3	4	5
China real estate visit	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture on U.S. economic and social development trends	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture on the prospects of US-China economic relations	1	2	3	4	5
Naval Academy visit	1	2	3	4	5
World Bank visit	1	2	3	4	5
U.S. Capitol visit with lecture	1	2	3	4	5
Embassy visit	1	2	3	4	5
Federal Department visit	1	2	3	4	5
Federal Court visit	1	2	3	4	5
Pentagon visit	1	2	3	4	5
High school visit	1	2	3	4	5
University visit	1	2	3	4	5
U.S. logistics company visit	1	2	3	4	5
Media perspective on the U.S. economy recovery	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture on the challenge and opportunities of Chinese business in investing in the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5

7. Please evaluate whether the following learning methods are effective in achieving your learning goals?

(5= very effective; 4= effective; 3= good to have; 2= not effective; 1= not effective at all.)

Interaction with professor	1	2	3	4	5

Individual learning	1	2	3	4	5
Reading materials	1	2	3	4	5
Lecture	1	2	3	4	5
Corporate visit	1	2	3	4	5
Classroom on bus	1	2	3	4	5
Questioning	1	2	3	4	5
Student sharing and feedback	1	2	3	4	5
Team discussion and reflection	1	2	3	4	5
Individual reflection and introspection	1	2	3	4	5
Others, please specify	1	2	3	4	5

8. Please evaluate whether you are satisfied with overall course performance.
(5= strongly agree; 4= agree; 3= neutral; 2= disagree; 1=strongly disagree.)

Course learning objectives	1	2	3	4	5
Course content	1	2	3	4	5
Course organization	1	2	3	4	5
Professor performance	1	2	3	4	5
Meals/Restaurants	1	2	3	4	5
Welcome & farewell	1	2	3	4	5
I am overall satisfied with this course	1	2	3	4	5

9. What would you suggest for change in terms of course content, time allocation, teaching methods, or other ideas deemed appropriate? Why and how would you change it?

Appendix B

2015 Pre-program Reflection Questionnaire

1. *Please reflect on your current understanding of the four leadership learning domains based on your past life or work experience before attending the IEPD program.*

    a) Political and legal leadership

    b) Business leadership

    c) Education leadership

    d) Cross-cultural business leadership

2. *Within the above four leadership learning domains, what do you expect to achieve on your development?*

3. *What changes do you expect to realize as an impact of this learning program?*

Appendix C

2015 Post-program Reflection Questionnaire

1. *Please reflect on your learning outcomes based on the four leadership learning domains at the end of the IEPD program.*

    a) Political and legal leadership

    b) Business leadership

    c) Education leadership

    d) Cross-cultural business leadership

2. *Within the above four leadership learning domains, what learning outcomes have you achieved?*

3. *What specific actions and changes do you expect to realize after the IEPD program?*

Appendix D

2015 Follow-up Reflection Questionnaire

It has been a few months since the end of the IEPD program, and you may have turned your action plan into concrete implementation. Please take this moment to reflect again on your learning outcomes acquired from the IEPD program.

1. How do you evaluate your learning outcomes regarding the leadership learning domains?

(Please use scale 1-5 to indicate your level of agreement with each statement.
5= most effective; 4= effective; 3= neutral; 2= not effective; 1=not effective at all)

Political and legal leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Business leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Education leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Cross-cultural business leadership	1	2	3	4	5

2. *Looking back to the IEPD program, what significant learning outcomes you have achieved have had the most impact on your professional development?*

3. *What specific changes have you made as the impacts of the IEPD program?*

Appendix E

2015 Course Evaluation Form

This evaluation form is to learn about your learning experience, outcomes, and evaluation on the quality of the course design. The survey is anonymous and will be used for course improvement only, so please feel free to give us your honest feedback. Thank you!

1. How do you evaluate your learning outcomes regarding the leadership learning domains?

(Please use scale 1-5 to indicate your level of agreement with each statement.
5= most valuable; 4= valuable; 3= neutral; 2= not valuable; 1=not valuable at all)

Political and legal leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Business leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Education leadership	1	2	3	4	5
Cross-cultural business leadership	1	2	3	4	5

2. Please evaluate whether the following learning methods are effective in achieving your learning outcomes?

(5= most effective; 4= effective; 3= neutral; 2= not effective; 1= not effective at all.)

WeChat discussion and reflection	1	2	3	4	5
Bus talk and sharing	1	2	3	4	5
Team discussion and reflection	1	2	3	4	5
Reading materials	1	2	3	4	5

3. Please evaluate the overall course performance.

(5= strongly agree; 4= agree; 3= neutral; 2= disagree; 1=strongly disagree.)

Course learning objectives achieved	1	2	3	4	5
Course content	1	2	3	4	5
Course organization	1	2	3	4	5
Course delivery	1	2	3	4	5
Professor performance	1	2	3	4	5
Meals and logistics	1	2	3	4	5
Overall value of this course	1	2	3	4	5

4. Have you ever traveled to the U.S.? How long did you stay there?

_____

5. Are you involved in international business development?

1) I have been involved in international business development;
2) I plan to be involved in developing international business;
3) I have no plan to develop international business, but want to learn different practices;

6. What would you suggest for change in terms of course content, course delivery, teaching methods, or other ideas deemed appropriate? How would you change it?

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Biography

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Yurong works for Beijing International MBA at National School of Development, Peking University since 2004. As a practitioner in business education, her work covers academic program development, student training and coaching, and educational administration. In academic program development, her work includes the executive MBA international learning programs, MBA experiential learning and action learning programs. In the training and coaching field, she develops business field visit programs for career enrichment, career coaching, and career skills training. In educational administration, her role covers employer relations, alumni relations, and government relations management. She also organizes human capital development forums as a means to strengthen communication among academics, human resource practitioners, and the MBA students in the business education network. Managing stakeholder relations helps the school connect the demands of the market with school resources and products, and leverages the expertise of the business school for the business development in China.

Before joining the institution of higher education, Yurong had four-year experience in international cooperation and E-business development under the Ministry of Communications in China. Her work involved project cooperation with bilateral and

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